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BETHLEHEM PEASANT WOMAN BRINGING GRAPES TO JERUSALEM.

HOME IN THE HOLY LAND.

A Tale

ILLUSTRATING CUSTOMS AND INCIDENTS

IN

MODERN JERUSALEM.

BY

MRS FINN.

60936

ac.

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me."

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TO

THE COUNTESS OF GIFFORD,

THE FRIEND AT WHOSE KIND SUGGESTION,

WHEN IN JERUSALEM,

I DEVOTED THE EARLY MORNING HOURS TO DESCRIBING

A "HOME IN THE HOLY LAND,"

This Volume

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

LIFE in the Holy Land is singular in many respects, but in none more so than in the strange mixture of circumstances and events. Associations, sacred and profane, sober and ridiculous, civilised and barbarous, sorrowful and merry, jostle each other in a manner which is hardly to be conceived by those who have not experienced it; and yet, on a little reflection, it will be perceived that it must be so. Actual life in any country contains many trifles, as well as situations of deepest interest: how much more must this be in a land where the most holy feelings have their earthly home, and yet where society is in a state of transition from primitive barbarism; where the daily incidents of life occur amid scenes which have been from earliest childhood consecrated in our memory; and where, in the natural course of events, the modern forms and ideas of European society are brought into immediate contact with customs of the time of Abraham, in hourly usage by his Arab and Hebrew descendants!

I have endeavoured to depict something of this life, with its startling contrasts and its never-failing in-

terest, sometimes in the form of journal, sometimes by giving letters written at the time, and more generally as a relation of events still fresh in my memory.

The narrative commences about the year 1845, when the recent British operations in Syria had directed attention anew to the Holy Land.

It was all written in Jerusalem. Singularly enough my friend Miss Rogers was at the same moment engaged in describing "Domestic Life in Palestine." Neither of us knew what the other was about. However, we each took a different point of view, and our sketches may be regarded as distinct pictures of scenes which have only the chief features in common. I may add that the incidents and characters here portrayed had their originals in real life, but I have been careful to avoid bringing forward living persons who might be identified on the spot. During our many years' residence in Jerusalem various noteworthy events passed before us. People came and went—lived and died—war broke out, and was succeeded by peace; and Jerusalem which was at first a mere Arab town, became the resort of royal personages—scientific travellers—historical celebrities. This little volume contains but a very small part of all that we saw and heard in Palestine. Perhaps more may be told on some future occasion.

E. A. F.

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HOME IN THE HOLY LAND.

CHAPTER I.

ARRIVAL IN PALESTINE.

THE dearest wish of my father's heart had been to visit the Holy Land, and we were now within sight of the long gray coast of Palestine, and the distant hills which flung back the glories of the setting sun were the hills of Judea. He had been very ill during the voyage. My mother's death, but a few months before, had broken his health. The sea had affected him unusually; but yet, on nearing Palestine, he had revived, and I hoped that the absorbing interest of the scenes we were about to visit would give a new direction to his thoughts, and that the genial climate would restore his health, about which, however, there had not seemed cause for any serious anxiety.

We sat together on the deck watching the shadowy lines and undulations of the mountain range. The grander heights which we had already passed were

...el had scarcely faded from our view, ...e before us must be some of those mountains which stand round about Jerusalem. Nestled somewhere among yon purple crests must be Bethlehem; and if we tried in vain to distinguish the yet dearer Mount of Olives, we knew that it also was there. We scarcely conversed. An occasional word or quotation from Scripture marked the current of my father's thought, as it passed down the course of time and reviewed the prominent events connected with the scene before us.

The early settlement of the descendants of Ham, on the line of coast from Jaffa northwards to the city of Sidon, the first town of Canaan; the appearance of Abraham, descendant of Shem, among the idolatrous nations, to preach the one true God, and raise His altar on yonder mountains; Moses surveying the promised land; its occupation by the twelve tribes; Tyrian mariners on the Great Sea, conveying the precious cedar rafts from Lebanon to the temple, or casting Jonah into the angry flood; the Assyrian hosts pouring down from the East, and the Grecian fleets under Alexander from the West, successively to spoil this richest of all countries.

The sacred story of our Saviour's life, from His birth when the star shone in yonder heavens over Bethlehem, to His ascension into the same heavens; the apostles, Paul the foremost, going forth hence to carry good tidings to the utmost limit of the habitable earth; and then the Roman galleys bearing down with their

countless legions to accomplish the great destruction, lay waste the holy place, and empty the land of its inhabitants; and finally, the children of the East, under Mohammed, rolling the resistless tribe of conquest from Egypt to Damascus. At length, pointing to a glistening town which rose from the very edge of the shore to the top of a conical-shaped hill, my father spoke, "That must be Jaffa." It was Jaffa, and our sailors were even then taking in canvas, and turning the head of our ship towards the land. "There," said my father, "is another illustration of the aptness of Scripture names. Joppa, 'the beautiful,' as it stands forth from the low coast-line; and how richly coloured is the background, as it recedes and melts into the blue and purple of those Judean mountains! Yesterday we saw why the snowy Lebanon received its name; and now there is Joppa. Truly she is *fair* to look on."

We soon cast anchor, and were surrounded by clumsy-looking boats, square-built, and almost flat-bottomed. The boatmen were screaming at one another in a language which I knew must be Arabic, strong and guttural; the boats jostled each other in a way that looked frightful so near our rolling vessel; for as soon as the anchor was cast and the sails were down, the Mediterranean swell took effect upon the ship, and she rolled in a distressing manner. In another instant a dozen of the boatmen had sprung on deck, and were wrestling with our sailors for the luggage; most of them wore turbans, and all were clad in picturesque

rags of blue and red, and yellow and green. In the scuffle one man's turban was knocked off, and a most absurd figure then appeared: his head was shaven, perfectly smooth, excepting two long plaited locks at the back; and these fell as the turban rolled off, and were instantly seized by his antagonist, who twisted them round his hand, and by main force pulled the poor man away from the coveted trunks, which were very near being pushed into the sea. The turban did roll into the sea, and was followed by its owner as quick as thought. We were told that probably within its folds were some precious charms, verses of the Koran written on scraps of paper, and perhaps money also; for it is an Arab practice to put away precious articles for safety into the turban folds. At length all the things which were to be conveyed on shore had been lowered into the boats; and my father and I also descended the ship's side, and with some difficulty gained our seats in the boat. There were three of these uncouth-looking boatmen, besides the steersman, who wore a larger turban than the others, and was gravely smoking a short pipe. One of the rowers had only one oar, with which he pulled first at one side and then at the other. As we neared the landing-place, I was appalled at the furious wall of surf which lay before us, dashing and beating over a line of half-sunken black rocks. "Don't fear, Emily," said my father, who saw my terror; "I watched the first boat; it passed safely: see, there is the opening." It was a narrow channel between two of the broken rocks, and

toward it we were rapidly borne. A swerve, a side-blow from a large wave, would have been destruction; but we shot safely through, our boatmen shouting in chorus, and the moment we had passed giving thanks to God (as we were told) in broken ejaculations.

And now we were at the landing-place—a steep, wet rock, at the top of which stood a crowd of vociferating Arabs. Pulled up by some of these, and pushed up by the boatmen, we stood on dry land. But I felt dizzy and confused; my father's face also alarmed me: he looked ill, and I forgot all other feelings in the need of shelter and rest. An elderly Arab man, in a dingy scarlet robe, succeeded in pressing through the throng, and made us understand (through the dragoman) that he was the British consul, and wished to take us to his house. His attendant, who bore a silver-headed stick, made way for us through the crowd, and led the way up steep and dirty lanes. In one place, a huge camel, laden on either side with sacks, was coming down upon us, and must have crushed us, had not the consul's man sprung forward and snatched the rope which was dangling from its head, and checked its progress. By stooping down we managed to pass under one of the sacks at its side, while the animal growled at being meddled with. The owner of the camel was behind, a swarthy Arab, who stood still, and looked on. Entering a low door, and crossing a paved court, our guides ascended a ruinous flight of stone steps, and we found ourselves in a middle-sized room, with whitewashed walls, where our host conducted us

to a sofa, or rather divan, at the upper end, and, having seated us, told us that this was our house, and that he was our servant. He then, with many salutations, inquired after our health. My father needed rest and refreshment; but I did not know the proper customs, or whether we might ask for such things as he required; and thus we sat for some time looking at each other. Presently sweetmeats, and then small cups of coffee, were served, and pipes, which we declined; but our host soon became apparently absorbed in watching the curls of smoke as they rose from his pipe. At last, when our dragoman came in with the luggage, I made an effort, and told him to say that my father, not being well, needed supper and early rest. The consul placed his hand on his head, and asked what we desired to have; "we had only to command," &c. I asked for broth, on which he got up and gathered his robe about him, and, putting on his slippers, which stood near the door, left the room. Presently a boy passed through, carrying by the legs a couple of screaming white fowls. There was a long interval, during which my father rested on the divan, and I tried to collect my thoughts. Was this really the Holy Land? All the feelings with which I had expected to set foot in Palestine were gone. Would they come back, or were this whitewashed room and its dull Arab owner to be specimens of the kind of interest that awaited us? Surely not. There was the journey up to Judea; Jerusalem was before us. But what if the people in Jerusalem were like this? It was very unreasonable. Yet I

could not even think about Jerusalem as before. Fatigue and hunger had taken possession of me. I felt disappointed—strange, and in a strange place.

At last supper was brought in. Broth of a pale tint, suggestive of the late appearance of the fowls; the two fowls themselves, boiled, and as tough as might be expected; and some rice. There was a rickety table and two rush-bottomed chairs in the room. Of these our host appeared very proud, and told us that he, the English consul in Jaffa, was the only person who possessed such European luxuries. At first he would insist on waiting upon us himself, but desisted when he saw how uncomfortable it made us, and finally left the room. The fowls were very, very tough, and the rice too rich, so that our meal was soon ended. The same boy whom we had seen before removed the things, and brought a brass basin and ewer, with some soap, strongly perfumed with musk. He poured water over our hands, and then offered the embroidered end of a towel which was hung over his shoulder. Our host came again, just before little cups of coffee were offered; and, having sipped them in silence, he asked us whether we desired anything else. We asked to be shown our bedroom. "Here," said he; and once more clapping his hands, the boy appeared, and brought mattresses and cushions of tarnished silk, and thick coverlets of the same, which were spread on the floor for us, and here we spent the night. But sleep was impossible. Mosquitoes and various other insects came forth like beasts of prey, and banished whatever sleep

the heavy fumes of tobacco had left. Cocks crowed at least every two hours in some place close to the door of the room. At last day began to break. We rose and went to the window, which looked over a confused mass of building towards the sea. All sense of discomfort vanished in watching the broad expanse of waters—ever fresh, ever new—and in observing the changeful colours as dawn advanced into daylight; and gray and sober daylight was quickened into life by the beams of the rising sun, when every wave was tipped with gold, and danced in very gladness. My thoughts reverted to that morning when the apostle Peter was in Joppa praying on the house-top, and how he must have had this same scene before him when the messenger from Cæsarea arrived.

Suddenly a little Arab bark appeared, skimming the waves before the breeze. "There, Emily, that might be Jonah's ship of Tarshish," said my father, "before the storm came on which frightened the sailors."

"Yes, going northwards, too, as he must have been going. How strangely time seems to be compressed —past and present all brought into one: Jonah and St Peter and ourselves, with this spot as the link!"

"Not only so," replied my father, "but in nearer distance than those the crusading hosts whose vessels have often ridden at anchor on yon waters."

"Somehow the crusading times appear to me actually farther off than the times of Bible history."

"That is because you are less familiar with them.

Have you never observed in a landscape, how distant a hill-top or any other object appears until you have been to visit it; and then how much nearer it always appears, though you may look at it from the very same spot as before? Vagueness gives distance. Thus it is with the mind. How often have I felt as if I were almost standing on the Mount of Olives, and could count the very stones, because its histories and scenes are so long familiar. Let us make haste, Emily. I long to be there. Now that we are in the Holy Land, I feel as if that blessed spot were farther off than when I used to think of it in England. The sense of vagueness and distance has come over me, as if even now our feet may not stand within "thy gates, O Jerusalem!"

"Can we not be there to-morrow, father?"

"We ought to be there to-morrow. It is only twelve hours hence. It is strange, however, since landing, I feel as if a very great distance had come between. Yes, let us make haste."

The entrance of our host stopped the conversation. He made earnest salutations, and evident hearty greetings in his own tongue; and finding we could only bow in return, at last said—"Bono—bono?" Supposing this meant, "Are you well?" we replied, "Bono." Little cups of coffee were again served, and this time I began to relish the fragrance and the strong bitter flavour. He managed to inquire for our dragoman Dimitri. He was a Greek who had made various pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and told me, "I went

Jerusalem five times. My name not Dimitri now: My name Haj Dimitri. I been Jordan: I clean; I very good now." (He meant that his sins had been washed away in the sacred river.)

It was soon settled that Haj Dimitri and the consul should hire horses for us, and that by noon we should start on our journey.

"Lady," said Dimitri, "me find one English gentleman in convent. He also ride to-day. He want travel together. Arabs bad people—kill, rob. One Aboo Gosh very bad man. Better have many."

"Very well," said my father. "Tell the gentleman that we shall be happy if he will join us." And so it was settled.

After breakfast, the consul told me that his wife and daughter wished to visit me. They came. The wife, a fair, plump little woman of, I thought, forty, (but was told afterwards five-and-twenty,) with good-natured smile, but vacant expression. She tried to kiss my father's hand, and took mine for a moment, and then raised her fingers to her lips and head. Her daughter, a rosy little creature, with dancing black eyes, and some natural flowers pinned into her dainty little turban. She was a pretty picture, arch as a kitten, and as shy. After some minutes of dumb show, lemonade and then coffee were brought in. The little girl gracefully took each from the servant, and presented them to us and to her mother. After a little more pantomime they rose and left, after repeating the same ceremonial as on entering. I must not forget the

dress of the Arab lady. It consisted of a gay jacket, embroidered in gold, a skirt of some kind of light silk, and sky-blue trousers of the same, very full. On her neck she wore gold chains, and in her turban many diamonds. The little girl wore no jewellery, but otherwise was dressed much like her mother.

RAMLAH, *October 7.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Here we are, safely arrived at Ramlah, and I am for the first time in my life, within the walls of a convent. What a delightful ride we have had! If only my dear father were well, nothing would be wanting. At times he appears quite well. When we left Jaffa to-day he was in high spirits; and then suddenly he looks faint and ill, though he says it *is nothing*. How glad I shall be when we get to Jerusalem, where we can rest and enjoy perfect quiet!

My letter from Jaffa was finished to-day just before we started. It was more than noon (by the by, the people here do not seem to say twelve, o'clock, six o'clock, five o'clock, but noon, sunset, sunrise) before we left Jaffa. What a confusion—what a hubbub at the consul's house! mules and horses and men all mixed up together, neighing and braying and screaming! Muleteers in blue and red, and the consul in his long robes; Dimitri with a whip lashing man and beast; and the consul's janissary, with his silver staff and huge pistols in his girdle, ordering everybody and helping nobody. Trunks were put on the mules and

kicked off again before they could be secured—a man smoking a pipe with one hand, and trying to fasten a rope with the other. Grave little boys peeping and whispering to each other. How strange it appeared, not to understand what these children were saying! It does not strike me so much when grown people talk an unknown language, but these children. I said so to my father.

"Never mind, Emily," he replied, "learn their language if ever you have any opportunity—always try and learn something of the language of any country you may be in, and—— there, you can understand *that!* That boy can laugh in English at any rate!" But the boy was abashed on being looked at, and slunk away.

"How sad the want of spirit and boldness in these boys, father!"

"It must be so, my dear, in a country which has suffered ages of oppression as this has done; and something may perhaps be set down to the Oriental indolence of manner."

At last we were mounted, and the cavalcade began to move—five mules and as many horses. The consul would accompany us some distance. He himself being a tall man, was mounted on a little donkey.

Through the narrow lanes in single file, the janissary brandishing his silver stick aloft and leading the way; then through an old gateway, and there lay the country before us. High hedges of prickly pear, (a large kind of cactus;) fine old trees, which my father

recognised as sycamore; in the distance the blue mountains.

"Those hills remind me," said my father, "of John Bunyan's Celestial Mountains."

Before I could reply we were among the orange groves. The sandy road was skirted on either side by luxuriant plantations of orange and lemon trees, as large as English apple-trees, their golden fruit gleaming amid the glossy foliage—and oh, the perfume!

"Dear father, if those be the Celestial Mountains, this must be John Bunyan's Enchanted Ground."

"The more need that we should press forward, my love. The Hill Difficulty and the Valley of Humiliation lie before us. We must not linger in this luxurious region."

In truth, a dreamy indolence would soon have stolen over our senses had we not hastened forward. In about an hour we had passed the gardens, and emerged upon the open plain of Sharon. Here and there a village or a grove of olive trees, distinguished by their gray tint, broke the wavy lines, as mile after mile spread before us. The very air seemed to dance in the sunshine, which, though hot, was tempered by a light breeze; but all was silent and empty, and, as it seemed, deserted. Here the consul took leave of us and returned to Jaffa, and we continued on our way alone. The English gentleman, of whom Dimitri had spoken, was not with us. We had been told he was waiting outside Jaffa, but had perhaps become impatient at our

long delay, and gone on. Gradually our animals fell into a quiet, monotonous pace; the mules followed each other; their bells tinkled drowsily; the brilliant sunshine seemed to add to the silence; and the breeze had died away. A muleteer broke the stillness by a wild chant—the effect of which was indescribably pleasing—in a minor key, and with long-drawn cadences, which died away at the close of each recitation. When that ceased, there was another delicious interval of silence. Neither of us spoke. At last my father's voice rose clear and musical upon the air. He was chanting in Hebrew, "By the waters of Babylon there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion." The melody was Hebrew as well as the words—an exquisite minor chant. I scarcely breathed. When he had done he said—

"That air was sung to me many years ago by Bishop Alexander. What a thrilling voice he had! I think one of the most intense enjoyments before us will be to hear him sing the 'Lord's Song' in the land of his fathers."

Long, long ago I also had heard Bishop Alexander sing. It was in England, at a chapel belonging to the Jews' Society, and my father took me to a service which was held there. I still remember the pathetic effect of Mr Alexander's voice, as he led a Hebrew chant, in which he first sang a few words of each verse, and was then joined in chorus by the congregation. But the pleasure of hearing my father's voice in the land of Israel was greater far, and his voice, too, has pathos

and very tender expression. After a short interval, he sang again—.

"To bless Thy chosen race,
In mercy, Lord, incline;
And cause the brightness of Thy face
On all Thy saints to shine;

"That so Thy wondrous way
May through the world be known,
While distant lands their tribute pay,
And Thy salvation own."

"And so it will be, Emily," he added; "when the chosen race has been restored to favour, and this land, which has been emptied of inhabitants, as we see it now, is re-peopled, the world will awake from its long slumber, and pay tribute to its King."

"I wonder how far the Jews in Jerusalem look forward to the future grandeur of their people, and how far they understand the influence which their restoration will exert on the rest of the world?"

"Of course," replied my father, "they look forward to the time when Israel shall have the pre-eminence, and when their Messiah shall be King of the world. But I fear they understand and care but little for the blessings which are to come upon the rest of the world, or even their own land. The corruptions of their religious system have a hardening and deadening effect, and the ill-treatment and dislike which the Jews have everywhere experienced have caused them to shrink into themselves. The Jews of Jerusalem have had their full share of dislike and hatred, as well in modern times as formerly."

Here Dimitri, who had been for some time impatient at having nothing to say or do, broke in.

"Sir, the Jews very bad—very bad, sir; they worse people in the world, sir. In their feast they kill people for blood—they put blood in their bread, sir."

"Oh, no, Dimitri, that cannot be."

"Sir, my priest tell me so. In Rhodes, sir, we did kill many for this; and in Damascus many did die for this."

"That may be, Dimitri; but I tell you it is not so. The Jews are forbidden to eat blood: it is contrary to their religion."

"You perhaps right, sir. I don't know; my priests all say so. They cursed people; worst people, sir."

"You must not say that, Dimitri. Our Lord Jesus was a Jew."

Poor Dimitri crossed himself three or four times, and looked so shocked as he said, "God forbid, sir," that to avoid a smile was almost impossible.

"Why, Dimitri, don't you know that our Lord was the son of David and of Abraham?"

"No, sir. Christos our Lord was the son of the Panagia, blessed be her name." And again he crossed himself.

"Can you read, Dimitri?"

"No, sir."

"I must try," said my father, turning to me, "to enlighten this poor fellow before we part with him—at least so far that he may understand who the Son of David is. I suppose he would lose faith in us if

we were to tell him just now that the Panagia herself was a Jewess."

"Can this be a fair specimen of Christians in the East?"

"Why, no—I suppose not; but there must be many like him. We shall see when we get to Jerusalem."

The town of Ramlah now lay before us, amid vast olive groves in park-like scenery. The principal object was a tall tower of white stone; but the charm to me was in the multitude of palm-trees, whose feathery heads stood out clearly against the pale blue evening sky. We were reminded that it was autumn by the sudden coolness of the evening, and the long slanting beams of the sun had lost their power.

We entered Ramlah before sunset, and dismounted at the Latin Convent, where we now are. After some delay, a very massive iron door was cautiously opened by a monk in dark-brown habit and sandalled feet, and we were admitted into a little court surrounded by high walls. Off this was a chamber, vaulted and paved with stone, containing two clean-looking beds, a table and two chairs. This, we were told, was to be my room, as women are not allowed into the convent. My father was to sleep elsewhere—within the precincts, I believe. It had been settled that we are to rise at two o'clock to continue our journey; so, after supper, (it was a fast day, and the monk told us we could therefore only have fish, which, however, was very good,) my father retired. I have been afraid of losing the freshness of first impressions, and have written so far

before going to rest, by the light of an antique brass lamp, with three burners fed with oil. The next letter will be from Jerusalem. I can hardly believe it.

And now, the only sound to be heard is the rustling of a noble palm-tree which stands in the court. Its shiny leaves glitter in the moonlight; black shadows, very black and sharply defined, divide the pavement into day and night—night where they fall, and day where the moon pours its flood of light. I never saw such shadows or such moonlight before.

Good night. E. R.

CHAPTER II.

MY FATHER'S DEATH.

"Life over, we shall dwell in that city which shall never fall, because the Lord keeps it and dwells in it,—that which is the eternal Jerusalem, the vision of peace."—ST AUGUSTINE.

JERUSALEM, *Nov.* 6.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—This is the letter which was to have been such a happy one; but it is the bearer of sad tidings. If you have received a letter which my kind friends here wrote to you nearly a month ago, you will already know the grief which has befallen us; and that, though still in Jerusalem, I am here *alone;* that our dearest father was not permitted to reach the Holy City. He has been taken from us in a manner the most sudden and afflicting.

Come soon, for I am very desolate. But, oh! when

we meet, it will not be to talk with him, and rejoice in the fulfilment of his heart's desire, and together visit Bethany and the Mount of Olives; but for you and me to visit his grave, all lonely outside the city. The rain is even now falling upon it, and . . . . But this is not right. We shall meet again, and I *do* look forward. The sight of the blessed Mount of Olives soothes my mind more than anything else. I see it now as I write, though the storm and howling wind will bring back sorrow and the thought of his grave.

. . . . I have been, not ill, but in a kind of stupor, and forgot, till to-day, that you will be frightened at getting no letter; and I will try and tell you how it happened. It is strange how every little circumstance is vividly in my mind; it is all before me by night and by day. I cannot forget if I would.

Perhaps this will pass away when I have written to you — I mean this involuntary dwelling upon the scene. And then it is right you should know all; and it will be easier to write now than tell you afterwards. But when will this letter reach you?—and you may be ignorant all this time, and looking forward, my poor brother, to Easter, as I did only one little month ago, when I wrote you my last letter from Ramlah. All then seemed bright and fair. It is true he was not well—that is, not strong; but he was not ill, and I had no fear at all. . . .

We left Ramlah Convent at one o'clock in the morning, after I wrote that letter. Neither my father nor I had been able to sleep: the mosquitoes made it impos-

sible; but the clear freshness of the moonlight night prevented my feeling weary; and I could not see how my father looked. He said there was nothing but a little want of sleep the matter with him, and appeared extremely to enjoy the glorious night. The moon, almost full, was declining in the west; the stars above and before us of liquid brilliancy, and the air sharp and reviving. The gentleman whom we had missed the day before had, like ourselves, slept at the convent, and now joined us. Our mules and baggage had gone on to Jerusalem—taking advantage of a large party, whom they found at Ramlah, going up through the night. For some distance the road was plain and flat, and the horses appeared to know every step. Our companion was cheerful; and he and my father conversed about the antiquities of Jerusalem, and the various traditions and conflicting opinions about the identity of sacred places.

Occasionally there was a pause in the conversation, and the stillness was relieved by the plaintive cry of the plover among the rocks. Gradually the road began to ascend, and became very rugged and broken. After nearly three hours' ride, we had climbed a very steep pass; and here my father said he felt faint and tired, and wished to dismount and rest a little.

I found that, when he had dismounted, he was very faint indeed; but a little wine and water revived him, and after a few minutes we were able to proceed. For half an hour all went on well, when his silence drew my attention; and I could just distinguish that he was

sitting very unsteadily on his horse. Again we dismounted, and again the faintness passed off; so much so, that, after a little while, he conversed very cheerfully with our companion about ancient art, and the pictures of the great masters on sacred subjects; and spoke of your love for painting, and intention of coming to this country to choose a subject amid the scenes in which the incidents actually occurred. Then he suddenly added, "Emily, I have found a subject for your brother—the return of Naomi to Bethlehem with Ruth. That will give the contrast of a Jewish and a Gentile face—and poetry enough in the story to satisfy even him. Tell him I said so." And this, dear Walter, is the last message I have for you from those beloved lips.

It did not strike me then as strange that he should give me a message for you; but I am so glad, so thankful for your sake. On looking back, I can remember various little things which show that he had some kind of feeling that he should not see Jerusalem; but I did not heed it then. . . . .

Is not the idea of that picture beautiful? Come as soon as you can, and try to carry it out. We shall feel as if you were still working for him. . . . .

We rode on steadily for some time; then, after a long descent, and another fatiguing ascent, Dimitri told us that we had passed the village of the great Arab robber chief, of whom he seemed in great fear. In perhaps half an hour after this, I again perceived my father waver on his horse. He would have fallen, but I sprang down—I know not how—and was at his

side in time to break the shock. He gasped for breath; and could not raise himself. Our fellow-traveller saw what had happened, and dismounted instantly. We bathed his forehead, and gave him a little more wine, and he said he would try to sleep. The Englishman took off his greatcoat, and spread it on the ground. I sat down, and laid his head on my lap. He slept so quietly, that I still did not fear or see any danger. My father's horse and mine had been neglected in the confusion, and had walked on towards Jerusalem in the dark. Our companion set off in pursuit. Presently my father again became very faint. The wine flask was empty. Dimitri had nothing. Then he said, "Lady, I know one Arab village here. I bring people —make fire—make hot coffee. Very good for the gentleman." I was so thankful: and he went. It was not until he was gone that I bethought me of our loneness here on the mountain-top. There was not a soul near us, but I was not afraid. Anxiety for my father had now absorbed every other idea: but his breathing comforted me; and still I did not dream that he was in danger. He seemed asleep. Presently the moon set, and all was dark. Even the stars were hidden by masses of dew-clouds, which soon covered, not only the sky, but the mountain-tops, and filled up the valleys below; and I could see nothing but the few bushes among which we were seated, and which became perfectly wet and very fragrant as the dew rested on them. The heavy masses rushed past, and there was a low whistling sound in the wind.

At last the Englishman returned with the horses. We did not speak, for fear of disturbing my father. It then occurred to me that perhaps there were wild beasts in these mountains; and I was very glad that this thought did not come while I was all alone. The horses became fidgety: perhaps they smelt some beast of prey. But none came near us.

My father's breathing became heavier. I was then for the first time alarmed, and said so to our companion. We stooped down to listen, and then felt his pulse. "I know nothing of medicine," he said; "but I fear there is danger. I wish we had a doctor." Then indeed I felt helpless. "Can we do nothing?" "Nothing, I fear; we have no restoratives." At this moment the horses pricked up their ears. "Thank God," said my companion; "they hear some one coming." It was so; Dimitri was at hand. The faithful fellow sprung off his horse, and said, "Here, lady, here is the coffee." "Oh, quick, Dimitri; lose not a moment!" The Englishman and he began to collect sticks, which at first would not kindle, they were so wet; but soon a spark appeared. Two or three wild-looking men and boys now came up.

"Fear not, lady," said Dimitri; "they are from the village; they will make the fire." And they did so. The boys gathered sticks, and the men, by turns stooping on hands and knees, blew with their mouth, until a steady flame burst out. I could not see my father's face. It was turned the other way; and he was again breathing quietly and evenly. These poor wild Arabs

were very kind: they made all possible haste; but it seemed very long before the coffee was made and brought me. I spoke to my father: he did not hear. I raised his head a little: he did not answer. "Father, dearest father!" The heavy breathing had returned; but he *did* hear me, and opening his eyes a moment, said, "Bless you, my child!" and closed them again. Dimitri held a blazing branch towards his face, and crossed himself. My father breathed, but he was dying. We could do nothing, absolutely nothing. A few moments, and all was still: my father was gone. The blaze died away. All was dark; and I sat still, with his head upon my lap. . . . .

At length, in a low, firm voice, our companion said, "You must let me lead you to a better seat. I will take care of him."

I obeyed, and Dimitri sat down beside my father and wept. I did not weep. My companion left me on a rock and went back. I could hear them talking in a low voice. Then he came back and said, "Your dragoman is going to Jerusalem, but will come back soon. I will watch." And then Dimitri's horse was heard galloping away. I raised my head, and there was the morning star, pure and bright, just risen. And then I wept; how long I know not, for the sun had risen, and it was quite daylight when I became aware that there were several people behind me and near my father. I looked up, and saw our companion engaged in arranging his shawl around him. He was preparing for removal. It flashed upon me that he must be

buried. I sprang up and said, "Not here—*not* here. He used to wish that he might be buried near Jerusalem."

"No, not here," replied he. "I have sent to the bishop in Jerusalem."

"Ah, he will not see him again," I recollected. "He so wished to see Bishop Alexander once more."

I sat down beside him. After a long interval, the sound of horses' hoofs was heard again. Two Englishmen appeared. One was a clergyman, the other a physician. Dimitri followed, and brought with him several men and a camel. The animal was made to kneel down, and my father was laid upon him.

"We truly sympathise with you," were the only words uttered by the clergyman. His grave, kind face brought my tears back for a while, but it was only for a little. They brought me my horse, and I followed my father along the rugged road; but the camel never slipped or stumbled.

Once the clergyman came to me and said, "There is the Mount of Olives. The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee."

I could scarcely see, but it was enough. There was comfort for even such sorrow in those words. Once again this kind man spoke to me. "Those are the walls of Jerusalem, but we must not enter it—the usages do not allow us. We are going towards that olive-tree; that is our burial-ground."

Were they going to bury him immediately? This

seemed too dreadful. I could not bear it, and said, "Not yet,—please not yet!" But he answered—

"This is an Eastern climate; and then he is not *here*. Try to look up." And thus saying, led my horse to the burial-ground, repeating the words he had said before, "Shall come, and all the saints with Thee."

What a desolate spot—dusty and unenclosed, and all in the bright sunshine. I felt a kind of horror at laying my father there; but those blessed words recurred to my mind, and I was resigned. They laid him there. The prayers were read by the same clergyman, and they led me away.

Dear Walter, I can write no more. I want to tell you—ah! how lovely as I raise my head, there is an exquisite rainbow resting on the Mount of Olives; the dark rain-clouds are passed over, and the evening sunlight gilds its summit.

Do come soon, dear brother. There is great comfort in being here in Jerusalem, and looking at the Mount of Olives. E. R.

It is many years since that letter was written, and I can now look back calmly at this period of sorrow. The writing had been a great effort, and I fainted before it was quite finished, and remained ill for many weeks, during which I could have been scarcely conscious. I have a confused recollection of having been in bed, and of seeing people moving to and fro, one of whom was the physician who had come out on that morning. When I began to revive, and while grief

was still fresh, it was my one solace to watch the Mount of Olives through the window opposite my bed. Early in the morning the little building on the top, called the Dome of the Ascension, would brighten with the first rays of the rising sun. By day it seemed a firm resting-place for my thoughts, and in the evening the last gleam of light would linger there after all else was cold and gloomy. The golden beauty of autumnal sunshine in this climate invested its grave and simple outline with a kind of halo.

Is it surprising that the object of all others around the Holy City which is endeared to my heart should be the Mount of Olives?

That verse, "He shall come, and all the saints with Thee," was ever in my mind as I gazed. It at once connected myself, my own feelings and dearest hopes, with that visible spot of earth. The white clouds which at this season often hovered about it, brought the ascension of our Saviour, as it were, before me; and then those few thrilling words, quoted at the moment of my keenest distress, would link themselves with the words of the angels, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." In this manner the events of the Bible were made present and real to my mind, and I never afterwards lost that inestimable advantage which seemed naturally to extend itself to all places in the Holy Land. The very places were identified with the Bible, and its promises, as well as its histories, with my own hopes and feelings.

Thus by degrees the sense of bereavement wore away, and certain looking-forward to a blessed meeting was kept alive, until it has become the constant comfort of my life. Petty cares vanish into insignificance, and greater trials seem but as so much preparation for this happiness; and this I count one of the chief blessings to be derived from having lived in the Holy Land.

CHAPTER III.

STAYING AT THE CONVENT OF THE CROSS.

THE people in whose house I was staying were very kind and sympathising. The mistress attended me constantly, but she could not speak English, and I was too ill to attempt Italian or French. Everything was done for my comfort; and the physician whom I have mentioned came daily and endeavoured to restore me to health, and so far succeeded that I was able to leave my bed, and had no complaint which could be described. He sought to draw me into conversation; but though I tried with all my might, I could not talk, and then he had the kindness to give up the attempt. One day, however, a light step, which I did not know, came to my door, and knocking gently, a girl of sixteen came in. Her face instantly brought back the expression and features of the clergyman who had come out on that day. She must be his daughter.

"Mamma has sent me to see you; I hope you are better."

There was something so kindly and simple in her manner that she scarcely seemed a stranger.

"Thank you; better."

"I am so glad to hear it, for the doctor says you must have change of air, and I am come to ask you to go with me to the Convent of the Cross. Indeed, you *must* come, for I have not been well. I have had the ague, and mamma wants me to have change of air too; and we are to go this afternoon."

Before I could recover from my surprise, or think of refusing, she spoke again—"We shall have such delightful air there; and the flowers are beginning to blossom, and I want to dry some. Are you fond of flowers?"

"Yes, very fond."

"I will show you the way of pressing them. There are the crocuses now in their beauty, and perhaps among the rocks we may find some cyclamens; for the Convent of the Cross is in a sheltered place, and the flowers are earliest there, excepting sometimes down by Siloam."

"How far is it?"

"About half-an-hour."

"I do not know how much half-an-hour is," said I.

"Oh, I forgot you are from England, where they speak of miles; but here we go by time, as the camels and horses walk. It is not quite half-an-hour, however. I think it may be two miles."

"Then I am afraid I could not go so far. I can scarcely stand."

"Oh, you are not to walk; mamma's donkey will come for you, and I have a pony, and Girius shall walk beside you. Now you are not going to say no, for the doctor says you must; and I so much want a little change."

It was not possible to refuse this warm-hearted creature; and she went on to tell me that we were not to come back, but to stay some days in a dear little room at the tip-top of the Convent; and papa would come every day to see us, and dear old Papas Athanasius, who is a great friend of papa's, will take care of us.

"Can I help you to get ready? Mamma won't come to see you to-day, but afterwards when you are better."

"She is very kind; and please tell me your mamma's name."

"Andersen; and my name is Mary Andersen. Is not your name Russell?"

"Yes it is."

This clergymen then was Mr Andersen, the missionary of whom I had so often heard as being for many years the only European living in Jerusalem. I longed to inquire about the bishop; but could not at first speak with calmness of one whom my father had so desired to meet. At last I did so. "Oh, the bishop is gone to England. He and Mrs and Miss Alexander are going to England by way of the Short

Desert to Alexandria. They must be in Egypt by this time."

I said nothing, but felt more lonely than ever before. Not only was my father gone; but my father's friend had left the country and I had not seen him.

"Now, what can I do for you?" said Mary in her kind way; "for it is growing late, and we must get there before sunset, for papa must come back before the gates are shut. You know they shut the gates at sunset, and then no one can get in or out of Jerusalem. Only they know papa so well, that they would let him in if the keys were not gone. They take the keys down to the Pasha every evening, and then no one can get in." And thus she chatted on to amuse me during my preparations, helping me the while, and then left the room to inquire whether the donkey had come. She came back with a neat-looking Oriental servant, to whom she spoke in Arabic with the utmost fluency. They guided my tottering footsteps down stairs, and placed me on the donkey. At first I could scarcely keep my seat, and felt as if I must faint; but the servant held me up. Presently we passed through a massive gateway, and were in the country, in a large grove of olive-trees; and the delicious air at once revived me. I felt almost well. The air was clear and thin, and yet not cold; birds were singing; the earth smelt fresh from the recent rain; and all was bathed in sunshine.

"We are not going the common way to the Con-

vent," said Mary, "for this was the Damascus gate, and we will go through the grove, and meet papa up near the Jaffa Plain. I thought you would like this way better than the road. Our house is near the Jaffa gate, and we always go out by that."

On leaving the grove, I saw at a distance the never-to-be-forgotten figure of the clergyman whom I now knew to be Mr Andersen. What unpretending simplicity in his manners, and mildness in his grave face! Yet the deep-set eyes and ample forehead bespoke powers of no ordinary mind; and the firm lines of his mouth showed that he was one of steadfast purpose, whether in work, or patient endurance. The dignified courtesy of his manner struck me no less than its great kindness. There was a striking likeness between him and his daughter. He, in a few words, expressed his pleasure at seeing me in the open air, and how rejoiced his daughter would be to have a companion in me. He then led the way. I glanced round, in the hope of seeing the burying-ground; but in vain, and did not venture to ask where it lay. So we went on. Now and then Mary called my attention to the lovely lilac and white crocuses which grew everywhere, and even blossomed among the stones in the very road. At last we came to a deep valley, nestled in which lay the most venerable building I had ever seen. It was gray with age, and its grand old buttresses looked as if they might stand for ever.

High up were one or two little loopholes. "There," exclaimed Mary, "that one in the corner is to be our

window. I have often been there. It is a dear little room."

Behind and on either side of the Convent was a grove of olives, their sober green in beautiful keeping with the gray tint of the building; but there was nothing dull in the aspect of the place. The rich bright brown of the earth, and the cawing of a colony of rooks who were going to rest among the old trees, combined to give a cheerful aspect to the whole—and the air of perfect rural quiet was deliciously soothing. On descending the hill, we were met at its foot by a venerable man leaning on a staff, who greeted Mr Andersen with the utmost warmth, and then turned to Mary, whom he seemed to regard almost as a daughter.

"This is Papas Athanasius," said she to me, and then spoke to him in Arabic. He raised his eyes to my face, and bade me kindly welcome, which Mary translated. I must describe him a little. Black eyes, in which the benevolent expression did not entirely quench the fire of his younger days, were in beautiful contrast with a white flowing beard; and a fresh complexion, such as one sees in hale old men, gave brightness to the placid expression of his features. He was clad in black robes, with a round cap of the same colour, which I afterwards found to be the usual dress of the Greek monks. It was delightful to see this old man and Mr Andersen together—so evidently old friends. They led the way to a very low door, perhaps only three feet high—at least it was necessary to bend

almost double in order to pass under it; and the doorway was so deep set in the thickness of the wall, that thinking I had passed it, I raised myself too soon, and was almost stunned by a blow, which I struck my head against the stone above.

It was late, and Mr Andersen returned to Jerusalem, after commending us to the kindness of the old monk. Mary and he conversed gaily in Arabic. Crossing a court where there grew a large lemon-tree, and another court where a cypress towered in the very centre of the building, we mounted various flights of stone steps, and reached the flat roof of the Convent, where broad terraces ran round the space formed by the central courts and overlooked the olive-groves, and the peaceful valley shut in on either side by the hills. "The dear little room" was little indeed; an oblong in shape of about my own length, and four feet wide, with two little square holes cut in the massy wall to serve as windows. Another little chamber adjoined this one, and here mattresses were laid down for us. An old woman, in dark blue and black dress, whom Mary explained to be a Greek nun, came and brought us coffee; and my companion tried to speak to her, but she did not understand Arabic, and replied in Greek, which Mary could not speak. But they knew each other of old; and so communicated by means of signs, and arranged our little apartments in the most snug manner, and spread our table-cloth, and supper of cold provisions (sent by Mrs Andersen) on the mat on the floor. We reclined in Oriental fashion

on cushions. The whole change had been so unexpected, and my mind was so exhausted by my illness, that I did not and could not think, but felt the quieting influence of the pure air and of the perfect stillness.

We spent several days here. My health returned incredibly fast. I felt no remains of illness, and gradually my mind recovered its tone; and I began to enjoy keenly the rambles among the rocks and hills with my companion. We wandered about in perfect security, and saw no one but the two or three Arab peasants employed in cultivating the Convent grounds, who were always respectful and kind; and I often said to myself, Is this the wild and dangerous country which I have heard described as Palestine? Surely in England we should scarcely be unmolested thus.

We were left much to ourselves all day. In the evening Mr Andersen would come to visit us; and then the old Papas Athanasius, who was at other times engaged reading, would come and entertain his guest. They conversed in Arabic, while smoking long pipes, until near sunset, when Mr Andersen left us; and we used to watch his gray horse climbing the rugged hill on his way to Jerusalem. When he was out of sight we had our supper, and went to sleep with the birds, and rose again with the birds in the morning. One evening, Mrs Andersen accompanied her husband. I found she was Irish; and her kind motherly way soon put me at my ease. She gave me a pressing invitation to make their house my home until my brother should

arrive; and I was obliged to compromise matters by arranging to visit her for a while, instead of returning to my lodging, when our stay at the Convent ended. She said that this must be soon; for that I should find it too cold in January, when the winter usually begins, in a room without glass windows, and only a loose shutter and rickety door to keep the night winds from sweeping across our bed; and she told me that the natives of this country use charcoal fires, in little pans or braziers, when the weather is cold, but that this is very dangerous, and that some lives have been lost by it; although, "in general," she added, "the doors and windows let in plenty of fresh air to counteract the effect of the charcoal fumes." Next morning the sun was too hot for our usual walk. I was surprised that it should be so in the month of December; but afterwards found that the sun is always hot in Palestine, if it shines at all, and that it is necessary even in winter to protect the head from its beams. Mary therefore proposed that we should go and visit the church; and she explained that this is called the Convent of the Cross, because it is believed by the Greeks, that in a place under the altar of the church the tree grew which was made into the cross of our Lord. Before reaching the door we were met by a singular perfume, rather heavy, as of some aromatic substance burning. "That is incense," said Mary. "They burn a great deal of incense in the churches. When we go to Jerusalem I will show you some. The Mecca pilgrims bring it from Arabia. This does not smell pure, it is mixed

with pitch; but the pure frankincense is very fragrant. We can buy it in the bazaar. When a person has a son or any other relation ill, he will often make a vow to Saint Thekla, or St George, or the Virgin, to burn so many piastres worth of incense before their picture, if the saint will make the sick person well."

The church was a large building; the central space open and unoccupied even by seats. At the farther end, above two or three steps, was a high screen of wood carved and gilt, separating what appeared a very small chancel from the rest of the church. "That is the Haycal or Temple," said Mary; "the altar is there, and only the priests are allowed to enter. You see that crimson curtain in the middle; they draw it back when mass is celebrated, and the priest stands there."

In walking up the church, my attention was attracted by the pavement, which was composed of innumerable stone mosaics, about half an inch square, and disposed in various elaborate patterns.

On each side of the central space or body of the church was a side aisle, divided off by a row of thick columns; and on these columns were painted in fresco, immense portraits of saints, larger than life, in the most grotesque style of feature and of dress, not to speak of perspective. They were represented as emaciated by long fasting, pale, with scanty clothing and long white beards. I was shocked, on looking up within the dome which rose high above the chancel, to see a painting of an old man with the word *God* written beside it.

Lower down were paintings, all in the same rude fresco, and considerably injured by time, of our Saviour, the dove, (to represent the Holy Spirit,) and the Virgin Mary.

We next went round a narrow passage behind the altar, and down steps—all apparently cut in the rock—into a sort of cavern, where there was a small round hole filled with earth. The man, who carried wax tapers to light us, knelt down and touched the earth with his fingers, and then kissed them. A hole in the rock above corresponded with this one; and here they believed the sacred tree to have been rooted and to have grown.

Going back to the church, we examined the paintings with which the lower part of the rood screen was set. Most were of saints, and one or two of the Virgin—very dark in complexion; and the pictures were evidently of considerable age, and by the hand of a master. All but the face and hands were cased with thin plates of gold or silver, made to represent crowns and other ornaments, which were in one or two set with diamonds and pearls. Others were ornamented with commonest tinsel plates. One picture was much larger than the rest. It consisted of a representation of the history of the cross. In one place was the tree growing, green and fair. Then there was an old man, Abraham; while another white-bearded patriarch of more youthful expression was leading an ass, which bore, in panniers on his sides, jars of water. This was Lot fetching water from the Jordan for the tree. One

of the jars was upset, and the water pouring out of it. This was the work of the devil, who stood by, trying to prevent Lot from getting any water to the tree. Next came King Solomon, seemingly preparing to have it cut down and used as a bridge, the Queen of Sheba standing by his side. I forget the other details between this and the cross being used for our Saviour's crucifixion, which was also represented. But the picture, though curious enough, was very inferior as a painting to the dark-faced portraits of the Virgin. Altogether there were incongruities in almost all these pictures, which were unpleasing—apart from the positive profanity of attempting to represent, as was done in those above our heads, the sacred persons of the Trinity. For this I was entirely unprepared.

The throne or chair intended for the patriarch was carved, and there were some curious specimens of needlework in the hangings; but far more beautiful was the mosaic pavement on which we were standing. The part in front of the altar was composed of arabesque designs intermingled with birds and flowers; and the various effects produced by a skilful use of three colours, black, white, and red, were remarkable. My attention was drawn to a dusky patch which disfigured one part; and my companion told me that this was human blood, shed at the time when the Persians under Chosroes invaded Palestine.

They burst into the Convent, then inhabited by Georgian monks, and massacred them all. There were many of these sad traces in different parts of the

church. Some near the entrance, others close to the altar, and others again in remote corners where these poor martyrs had sealed their faith with their blood. It needed no great effort of imagination to bring the terrible scene before me—the fury and wild cries of the invaders—the suspense of the poor Christians—the tumult—the literal offering up of their lives for the faith within their venerable church. Many such scenes were enacted in the early days of the Oriental churches, and even yet the spirit is not quenched which could enable Eastern Christians to rather lay down their lives than deny their Saviour at the bidding of a Mohammedan or heathen rabble. Good old Papas Athanasius, I feel sure, would prove a worthy successor of these ancient martyrs, if the storm were again permitted to rise. Yet the very thought is terrible! But how then is Christianity to be once more spread among the unbelieving nations, without going through persecution even to the death? Can it be gradually diffused in a peaceable manner, like the dew from heaven, until the nations are refreshed? or will the fierce Moslem spirit be once more aroused, when the Christianity which has been so long considered torpid or dead, begins to awaken and manifest something of its ancient life?

Mary broke this train of thought by reminding me that it was time to leave the church and prepare for her father's visit. As we passed through the vestibule, a deacon began to strike with small hammers a long curved plank, which was suspended by chains from the ceiling so as to permit free vibration. This was the

church-bell, real bells not being permitted by the Mohammedans. The sound produced in this manner was very distinct. I asked Mary if it could be heard at a distance. "Oh yes," she said; "we often hear it from the Convent in Jerusalem, especially very early in the morning; and then, you know, the various sects all live near and around their own convent, so that they are sure to hear it."

"What is the name of this strange bell?"

"In Arabic?—Nakoos."

CHAPTER IV.

EUROPEAN COMFORT IN AN ORIENTAL HOUSE.

WE returned to Jerusalem the following day, but not without promising to visit often our kind old friend, Papas Athanasius. On our way back to the city, I recognised the road by which I had arrived on the first day.

"Is not this the Jaffa road?"

"Yes, we are going in by the Jaffa gate to our house," said Mary.

In a few moments we came in sight of the two or three trees which marked the burial-ground. We turned aside, and stood beside the grave, but none of us spoke. After leaving the spot, I asked Mr Andersen if it would not be possible to have a wall built round it. An unenclosed burial-ground seems

terrible—not even a paling to keep animals from wandering over the graves. He said that "hitherto all efforts had been unavailing; the Moslems would not allow any wall to be built, as the shadow would fall, they said, upon the graves in their cemetery yonder"—pointing to a number of white graves nearly a quarter of a mile off. He added, that an application had been made to Constantinople to allow either the building of a wall here, or the removal of the burial-ground to a place where the shadow of its wall could not reach Moslem graves.

The distance from the Jaffa gate to Mr Andersen's house was short. A house on the left, as we entered the city, was pointed out as the bishop's.

"That tower on the right is called the Castle of David," said Mr Andersen. "Some suppose it to be the Hippicus of the time of Herod."

The lower part of this tower was composed of enormous blocks of stone, such as I had not seen before; and the whole building was coloured by time a rich warm yellow, in fine contrast with the blue sky overhead.

Crossing what Mary called Castle Square, we arrived, by a narrow lane, at an archway, in the side of which was a door. This was Mr Andersen's house; and Mrs Andersen received me with much warmth and kindness. She told me that her husband had lived here for many years—it having been the first house which he had hired in Jerusalem. At that time Mount Zion was but little inhabited, and was considered so dan-

gerous that his Moslem friends endeavoured to dissuade Mr Andersen from settling there. But he saw the desirableness of the situation, and felt no fear. Enemies he had none; and thieves were not likely to come and rob a plain, quiet missionary; and he never was molested. One side of the wall of the court was formed by the ancient little Syrian Church of St James; not now used. From the roof of this we had a view towards the Castle of David. On part of the intervening space stood the English church, in course of building; and a small building at the farther end was pointed out to me as the present chapel.

As this was the first Oriental house I had thoroughly seen, I will describe it. The small court of entrance had in it a stone staircase, which led up to a set of rooms, among which was the guest-chamber, which I occupied; and also, across a paved terrace, Mr Andersen's study. From this terrace there was a magnificent view of the Mount of Olives, and, apparently at its foot, the great Mosque of Omar, within the Temple enclosure, besides a considerable part of the city, and the distant Moab mountains, glowing in the richest purple and crimson tints.

The prevailing colour of the Mosque is a subdued green; and this was relieved again by the flood of golden light upon the Mount of Olives, the sight of which sent a thrill to my heart like the sight of an old friend. What a scene! What objects to rest the eye and refresh the mind, when wearied with toil or oppressed with care! My room was vaulted, and the

roof covered by a small dome, as are almost all the rooms in Jerusalem. It is not, as in Europe, that each house has one roof to itself; and this innumerable collection of domes, of different forms and sizes, gives a most picturesque effect to the views of the city. The houses, too, are built of stone, which remains white and fresh-looking for a very long time in this climate. European chairs, and table, and bed, gave a look of perfect comfort in this antique chamber. The floor, made of a kind of cement, was covered with mattings.

Passing again into the open air, and down the somewhat precipitous steps to the entrance court, I was led into an inner court, at the farther end of which an open door showed a little flower-garden. In the middle of the court was the mouth of the well or cistern.

Every house in Jerusalem has one or more cisterns, which are supplied with rain-water collected on the flat terraces. An Arab woman-servant was drawing water with a metal bucket, and filling earthen jars. On seeing her young mistress, she kissed her hands with affection.

"This is a townswoman," said Mary; "see how differently she is dressed from the people we saw near the Convent of the Cross."

Instead of the blue gown and crimson overcoat, her dress was a jacket of dark cloth, lined with fur, and a skirt of some dark striped stuff, full cotton trousers, and bare feet. A coloured handkerchief, twisted round her head, and passed under the chin, partly hid her face.

"Her name is Mother of John—Um Hanna."

"What an odd name!"

"Oh no; her own real name is Safiah, (Sophia.)"

The woman looked at us and laughed, repeating "Um Hanna"—"Safiah." She knew that we were talking about her.

"But," continued Mary, "her son's name is Hanna, and so she is called Um Hanna, the mother of Hanna. Every Arab woman is called after her son, as soon as he is born; and she always calls her husband, in the same way, 'Aboo Hanna,' father of Hanna; and so does every one, for it is a great honour to have a son. If we were to call her Safiah, it would show that she has no son."

"And the daughters?" I asked.

"Oh, nobody is called after their daughters: daughters are nothing!"—looking archly at me.

While she spoke, six or seven handsome pigeons came in by the garden door. Some settled on her shoulder, in the most coaxing manner; and the others clustered to drink water by the well's mouth, from a pan filled for them. Meanwhile, I observed that round the court were several doors of what appeared to be offices and servants' rooms.

Ascending another stone staircase, we reached a second paved terrace, on to which opened the sitting and bed-rooms. The sitting-room was furnished with a delightful mixture of Oriental style—matted floor, divans round the sides, and English comfort. A wood fire was burning brightly in an iron stove of English manufacture. The tea-table was being set by my old acquaintance Girius, neat as ever.

"You will excuse us, Miss Russell, if we do not set English fare before you. Butter is not yet in season, for in summer we cannot get any. But the bread is good: a Jewish baker makes it for us. And here is Bethlehem honey; and the oranges are from Jaffa, and the dates are fresh from Egypt."

This was all in keeping; and the tea-table looked as pretty as possible. Quiet conversation gave an additional charm to this my first happy evening in Jerusalem. I mentioned how oddly the custom of calling people after their children struck me.

"Yes, but, odder still, the children themselves are often called by a different name. I have heard an infant called Aboo Yakoob—Father of Jacob; because his own father being Jacob, he is, in due course, to make his own son Jacob, according to the custom by which a child is named after its grandfather. So the matter is cut short, and the infant called at once 'Father of Jacob.'"

"How very absurd! And now, can you tell me whether I am right in guessing your man's name, Girius, to be the same as George? I thought I heard you just now call him Girjis.'"

"Yes, Girjis is generally softened into Girius. It is the same as George. This is a great name among the Greeks, in honour of St George."

"You perhaps do not know," said Mr Andersen, "that St George killed the dragon in this country; and the place is shown close to Beyroot. Many churches and convents are named after him. The

church at Lydda is dedicated to St George: so is a convent near Bethlehem, and another small one just opposite the Jaffa gate; and others beside. The Arabs believe that St George can restore mad people to their senses; and to say a person has been sent to St George's, is equivalent to saying he has been sent to a madhouse. It is singular that the Moslem Arabs share this veneration for St George, and send their mad people to be cured by him, as well as the Christians. But they commonly call him El Khudder—The Green —according to their favourite manner of using epithets instead of names. Why he should be called green, however, I cannot tell—unless it is from the colour of his horse. Gray horses are called green in Arabic."

"You alluded just now to the Moslem custom of using epithets instead of proper names."

"Yes. They call Abraham El Khaleel—the Beloved, or Friend, (of God, understood;) and they use a great variety of expressions in this form when they speak of God—the Merciful, the Bountiful, the Only, (that is, the one true God,) and so on."

"You know, Miss Russell," said Mary, "that we don't call Hebron by its name in Arabic, but Khaleel, which means the Town of Abraham."

"Rather," said her father, "El Khaleel means The Friend, as I just now said; but, for shortness, it is applied to the town of Hebron, which is regarded as Abraham's town; but the Jews call it Khebrōn still."

"Do the Mohammedans," I asked, "look up with

much reverence to Abraham, or has their own prophet put him out of sight?"

"They have the highest reverence for Abraham; and the existence of his burial-place at Hebron keeps his memory fresh in the minds of the people."

We conversed about various subjects until it was time to retire. A procession of lanterns was formed; for, in crossing the open courts, unprotected lights would have been blown out, and repaired to our several chambers.

CHAPTER V.

BISHOP ALEXANDER'S DEATH AND BURIAL.

"In which Jerusalem is he (the true Israelite) to dwell? In that which has fallen? No. But in that mother of ours which is in the heavens."—ST AUGUSTINE.

NEXT morning, the first sound which greeted my ears was the twittering of a multitude of sparrows. Somehow I had forgotten that sparrows would be found in Jerusalem, and the sound brought an indescribable home-feeling to me. Then I remembered that David, in the Psalms, speaks of sparrows in the house of the Lord, and that in the New Testament some of the beautiful lessons of our Saviour make mention of them.

Next came the chipping and hammering of a multitude of stone-cutters. On looking through a little

window, I saw that this came from the church premises, and that the workmen were busy fashioning the stones for that building. How odd it looked, to see workmen in large turbans and full white breeches, sitting on the ground at their work! But they hammered away, and made a pleasant rough music, as their iron tools rung upon the stone, or rather made the stone itself ring. When Solomon's temple was being built, no sound of hammer or iron tool was heard.

The stone was exquisitely white and glistening; and I thought how beautiful the church would look when built—pure as snow. When we met at breakfast, I was told that the actual building of the church was suspended; that the Turks had stopped it; but that a firman from Constantinople was daily expected, and that then the building would rise rapidly—for meanwhile the materials were being prepared.

"The stone is very beautiful," I observed.

"And it comes from very interesting places," said Mrs Andersen; "from Bethlehem and from Anathoth. Anathoth is to the north-east of Jerusalem. The Arabs still call it Anâta; and it is in the tribe of Benjamin, among the cities mentioned in the Bible whose names are also preserved by the Arabs—Gibeah, Michmash, Ramah, and others."

"We must take you there, Miss Russell," said Mary; "it is such a nice ride, about an hour and a half."

Conversation then turned on the curious sight of the Arab workmen; and Mr Andersen gave a most amusing description of his difficulties, when he first com-

menced the work, in getting these Orientals to understand what labour meant. "They all had their pipes," he said, "and all wanted to smoke. While I stood by, it was pretty well; they would only smoke a little, and at least work with one hand. We were preparing the foundations of the church then. The moment my back was turned, down they would all lie on the ground; and when I came back, I would find, perhaps, one down in the hole we had made, picking up a stone or two with the hand which was not holding the pipe, and the rest all looking on and smoking away. Then they would get up on seeing me, and sing in chorus to encourage the labourer, and when a stone had really been removed, stop and ask for backsheesh. It seemed almost hopeless the idea of building a church with such men; they knew nothing whatever; and there was forty feet of rubbish to get through before the foundation could be even laid."

"Where do these men come from?"

"Bethlehem."

"But you seem to have succeeded, for they are now working extremely well, as far as I could see."

"They still need constant watching; but when they found that their pay depended upon their work, they improved rapidly. At first we could not even do this, for they would not come at all unless they got as much as they expected. They had no idea of steady earnings. However, by the time the regular architect came from England, the worst was over; and one or two masons from Malta have taught them to work;

for really the Arabs are very quick of perception. They can learn if they like; and when once the stimulus of money has been applied, they understand its meaning, and do very well. I have no doubt they will make excellent workmen. We have a young Arab as assistant in the House of Industry, who bids fair to become a very good carpenter."

Mr Andersen was summoned away; a Rabbi Myer was waiting to speak to him. The lady of the house apologised for leaving me,—as domestic matters in Jerusalem require the eye of the mistress,—and her daughter undertook to amuse me, by showing me her collection of fossils from the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and some from Lebanon, including, from the latter, some beautifully perfect specimens of small fish in thin layers of rock. Every little bone was in its place; and in one or two, even the tiny teeth were still in the mouth.

Dried flowers next occupied our attention; and the day passed pleasantly and rapidly till dinner-time. After dinner, I endeavoured to sketch the Mosque of Omar from the sitting-room window; and I found out, what has often given me trouble since, that it is a most difficult thing to draw the outline of that beautiful dome with accuracy. The curve is extremely graceful, and very few artists have succeeded in rendering it. I think, but am not certain, that the curve is a little different on the one side from the other.

We were surprised by the sudden entrance of Mr Andersen, whose face was very, very grave. I knew

that expression but too well, since the morning when I had first seen him. There was some great grief,—some calamity had befallen himself, or those dear to him. I felt as if my father's loss, and my utmost distress, had come back. What could have happened?

Before any of us could speak, he said, "I have very distressing news from Egypt. The bishop"——

"What has happened to the bishop? He is ill—he is not, not *dead?*" gasped Mrs Andersen.

"Even so; the bishop—is—*dead.* He has been taken from us. We shall see his face no more!"

There was a pause. They appeared stunned by the blow. It was too much for me. I rose, and ran to my room.

After some time, Mrs Andersen came to look for me; and though still herself in deep grief, she sought to divert my thoughts from my freshly-opened sorrow by conversation. We naturally spoke of the bishop; and I learned that the sad event had occurred on the borders of Egypt, suddenly in the night. In a tent had his wife and daughter been bereaved. How singular the coincidence between my own case and theirs! How soon they had met, who were not permitted to see each other in Jerusalem! My mind wandered on, and dwelt upon that happy meeting, and became calmer. My kind friend left me alone, and I went out and stood on the terrace, and leant against the little parapet-wall, and gazed upon the Mount of Olives. I heard a footstep—it was Mr Andersen.

He passed into his study; and I saw that the weight of grief had bowed his head.

We did not meet again that evening. I was unable to return to the sitting-room; and I believe each of us preferred to be alone.

Next day was Sunday. I had never yet been to church in Jerusalem, and was unwilling to be absent from the service. But it was very sad.

Mr Andersen announced their great loss to the congregation, and they lifted up their voice and wept. The bishop was truly beloved. In his calm manner, and with the traces of mourning fresh upon his own countenance, the preacher led his hearers to dwell rather upon the great gain to their beloved pastor, who had thus been released from the cares and trials which had often oppressed him; and I could not help hearing all as if it had been spoken of my own dear father. The discourse soothed us; and when it was over, the congregation separated in silence. Only one or two still wept, as though they would not be comforted. . . .

On the 20th December an express arrived, to say that the bishop's chaplain was at hand. He was returning to fulfil the expressed wishes of the departed, and lay his bones in the land of his fathers, and near to Jerusalem. The principal members of the mission rode forth to meet and pay the last honour in their power to their beloved chief; and the whole congregation prepared to join the funeral as soon as it should come near to the city. Not one would be absent; and an immense number of the natives, of every creed, also

"much people of the city," went forth to show their respect. For now, as before, the customs did not allow of the body being brought into the city.

The day waned, and still the mournful procession had not come. But at length Mr Andersen returned, to make the last preparations. The camels had been delayed by the rough and difficult mountain road. We all accompanied him. He put on his surplice, and waited beside my father's grave—close to which stood the poor orphaned children of the bishop, waiting for the arrival of the father from whom they had so lately parted in health and hope. My own affliction seemed as nothing when I looked on the little creatures, the eldest barely old enough to understand her loss.

The sun set, and the shades of evening gathered round. It became dark before the bier, borne by Christian Hebrews sorrowing for their Hebrew bishop, reached the burial-ground. Mr Andersen, who had suffered many griefs in his long, solitary sojourn in the Holy City, but none to be compared with this, preceded the coffin. His voice rose clear as he pronounced the beautiful pathetic sentences which I had once before heard him read in that very spot.

Torches were held by those who stood nearest to the grave; and by their flickering and uncertain light the service was concluded—more deeply solemn, in the darkness and silence of the open country, than I could have conceived.

Thus I saw Bishop Alexander, my dear father's friend, laid to sleep beside him in the dust of the

Promised Land,—in which Abraham himself owned not a foot of ground but the grave of his beloved Sarah, and the burial-field of Machpelah.

CHAPTER VI.

DAILY LIFE—SCENES AROUND JERUSALEM.

My health suffered but little. The calming influences of the Holy City were not weakened: the contrary was the case. And we used to go and sit on Mount Moriah, under the shadow of the temple wall, in view of Olivet; or on the Mount of Olives itself, and look upon the city; or in the quiet groves around Bethany, and read and converse until grief was softened, and sorrow once more subdued.

I remained at Mr Andersen's during the winter. Soon after the New Year I received a letter, informing me that my brother had left Cairo for Upper Egypt before the letters from Jerusalem had arrived, but that they had been forwarded by a traveller, who was going up the Nile, ten days later. I was both sorry and glad: sorry that I should have to wait so long without seeing him, for it would now be March before he could be here; and glad to think that he would have the full enjoyment of his journey of the Nile undisturbed by the knowledge of our loss, and of my being here alone in Jerusalem.

Perhaps nothing could have contributed so much to

the perfect restoration of my health as the quiet, simple life I now led, free from all undue fatigue or care, and yet in a scene totally new, which constantly furnished interesting occupation to my thoughts. Each day had the same routine as the day before, and yet no two days were wholly alike to me.

We rose early, for Mr Andersen attended the Hebrew service in the chapel every morning at seven. He and a clergyman of Hebrew origin used to officiate, a week at a time, by turns. I often went, not only out of reverence for my father's desire that I should learn Hebrew—the rudiments of which he had taught me—but from the thrilling interest which attached to the service itself. The congregation consisted of some twenty persons, almost all Hebrew converts to Christianity; and it was with indescribable feelings that I first heard them sing a Hebrew translation of

> "Come, let us join our cheerful songs
> With angels round the throne;"

and then the next verse—

> "Worthy the Lamb that died, they cry,
> To be exalted thus;
> Worthy the Lamb, our hearts reply,
> For He was slain for us."

A congregation of Christian Jews singing these words in sight of Calvary, and in the language of the first 120 converts in Jerusalem!—(See Acts i.)

Then, one of themselves leading our old familiar liturgy, also in the sacred tongue. I was taken by surprise, when, instead of reading, "O come, let us

sing unto the Lord," their voices were raised in the very Hebrew melody which my father had sung as we were crossing the plain of Sharon. It was not quite the same, however; for with him it was a single chant, exquisitely plaintive; but, as now sung, it was more rapid, and was double. The second part, however, had a peculiar, wild sweetness of its own.

To hear the Psalms of David in David's own tongue, on Mount Zion, and followed by devout acknowledgments of our Saviour, the Son of David, in reverent utterance of the Apostles' Creed, and in prayer, touched my inmost soul; and this early service gave a tone to the rest of the day, so that I never willingly missed attending it.

After breakfast, reading and study occupied our time till dinner. My father had said, when we were at Joppa, that I ought to try and learn something of the language of the country. I therefore resolved to do so. At first the Alphabet gave me a little trouble; but I had assistance. Mr Andersen, himself a first-rate scholar, was only too kind in giving me occasional help, and had the art of making his explanations singularly clear. His daughter had known Arabic almost from her infancy; and then, it was spoken in my hearing every day to the servants.

We read German together, that language being much spoken here; and I endeavoured, by writing Italian exercises, to prepare for mastering that also, as being one in constant use in the Levant. Indeed, formerly it was *the* one European language of the East,

spoken and taught by the Roman Catholic monks to the native dependents of their convents. I must not forget to mention, that the ladies belonging to the Jewish Mission visited and showed me much kindness; but as yet I shrunk from society, and was thankful to be as quiet as possible, until my brother's arrival.

For the same reason, I did not accept the invitations to join any one in visiting the Church of the Holy Sepulchre or Bethlehem—or, indeed, any of the more distant places. I wished to be with him when visiting them, and, above all, Bethlehem, as I knew he would immediately try to fulfil my father's last wish. But every afternoon, when the weather was fair, we walked in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and visited again and again Bethany and Siloam, the Valley of Jehoshaphat and of the Kedron, the rock-hewn tombs of the Vale of Hinnom, and those north of the city.

At first it grated harshly upon my ear, and sounded almost profane, to hear people talk of these places in an ordinary manner. "Where have you been to-day?" "Not far; only to Siloam." Or, "We have had such a nice walk to the Mount of Olives."

I could scarcely bear it; and regretted the reverence with which the very names of these holy places are connected in England. The effect on my feelings was most uncomfortable.

But gradually this wore off. No irreverence was intended, and the mind became accustomed to the familiarity,— until, after a few months, all the old feelings

came back with tenfold depth, and Jerusalem and Siloam, the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane, became the very places spoken of in the little old Bible given me when I was a child. The halo had returned—never again to leave these revered and well-known spots.

How glad I am that I never was a passing traveller, whose old feelings must be rudely shaken and dislocated by a hurried visit to the Holy Land, and who has not time, as I had, to live here until the early ideas of the Bible scenes and persons—formed at a distance, and very dear, but unreal, vague, and too spiritually abstract—are replaced by living knowledge.

It is a great blessing to have the persons of Scripture brought clearly before one, and the circumstances of their life wrought into our very life, by intimate knowledge of the scenes amid which they passed through the changes and troubles of this world; and, above all, to have the actual reality of our Saviour's human existence here on earth brought home to the mind.

Nothing can enable one to feel so deeply His having been one like ourselves, as the looking on the town where He was born, and the very prospect on which His eyes rested; drinking of the waters of which He drank, and walking on the roads which His feet trod.

Even faith can scarcely enable one to feel that the same Jesus is now alive in heaven, as one feels it when gazing on the same mountain from whence He ascended

into heaven. Often have I been thankful that I was allowed to live in the Holy Land, until its identity with the land of the Bible became an ever-present truth—more felt every hour, and every hour attaching the affections of my heart, by innumerable precious links, to the very rocks and stones.

Excepting an occasional day of high wind, almost always followed by two or three days of rain, the winter was extremely mild. As soon as the sun shone out, all was fair. The rain ran off immediately from the roads and hilly ground, or was dried up by the wind and sun; so that there were but few days in which we could not go out. Apart from the deep interest of the places themselves, our walks were rendered delightful by the fine clear mountain air, and the ever-varying views of hill, valley, and plain. The mountains of Moab almost always formed part of the distant view. The singularly even outline of the top of this range has been well compared, by Chateaubriand, to a line drawn in a picture, which has irregularities caused by the shaking of the artist's hand. But there was no sameness in the aspect of the Moab mountains. Promontories jutted out, and deep-cleft ravines furrowed their sides. From the high ground near Jerusalem the receding table-land on their summit could be distinguished, especially when covered with snow, as it sometimes was; and the tints of violet blue and gray ever varied upon them as the sun rose to meridian height; and when his evening rays, slanting from the far south, rested on them, they reflected back

his light in gorgeous hues—crimson, purple, ultramarine—while every rugged prominence shone like burnished gold. I could not have conceived anything so wonderful as these mountains were one stormy evening, when the sun burst forth from behind heavy masses of cloud in the west. The magnificence of colouring was beyond description. Every craggy front was pencilled out in gold; and the glowing masses of crimson and blue were exquisitely relieved by the cool grays of the foreground; and these set off again by the rich brown of some newly-ploughed fields; and the walls and battlements of the Holy City bathed in a soft, rich yellow, such as I have never seen elsewhere, and which made the stones look as if changed into transparent gold.

We stood and watched until the sun set. First the lower part of the Moab mountains was cast into shade, and the purple colour changed into wondrous blue, which stole higher and higher as the shade mounted. The light forsook the city, but the warm rays lingered a moment on the top of Olivet. Suddenly a cold gray fell upon the landscape, for—the sun was gone.

The sky still, for a short time, retained its beauty above the gray mountains, in changeful tints of pink, orange, green, fading into clear, cold blue.

They told me that this was the winter colouring of the Moab mountains; and I found them very different in summer. But I will not anticipate.

When the wind was too keen on the mountain tops, we descended into the valleys in search of flowers;

sometimes to the Vale of Hinnom for early cyclamen, whose broad variegated leaves and delicate pink and white blossoms grew in the clefts of the rock, and were often high up out of our reach, but not too high to be worth coming to look at. Sometimes we went farther down into the valley of the Kedron, where the almond-trees were in blossom, and the latest crocuses mingled with the yellow star of Bethlehem—dwarf iris, blue eyebright, and marigolds; sometimes north of Jerusalem, to the upper part of the Valley of Jehoshaphat, where the finest anemones grew. I gathered one about four inches in diameter.

But by the end of January every hill and sunny slope was scarlet with millions of these beautiful flowers. In the sides of the rocky tombs we often found fern, chiefly maiden-hair. Some of the loveliest flowers were most difficult to preserve—the iris, for example, and most of the white flowers. One day we came upon a plant, with long broad leaves, growing close to the ground—something like the dock. Its flowers, of a rich velvety purple, grew in a bunch in the centre, and had a strong perfume—pungent, and as of wine. This was the mandrake; and I was told that it bears a fruit which the Arabs like and eat.

Every week brought out fresh flowers. Many of them I had known in England; and they helped to give a delightful home-feeling—just as the chirping of the sparrows did on the first morning.

One evening, near the tombs of the kings, I came upon a plant of pimpernel—dear old pimpernel; but,

on looking for the flower, found it was deep blue instead of scarlet, and, on the contrary, the middle was scarlet instead of being blue. We were just about to turn and go home—for the long shadows of the olive-trees told that the sun was near setting, and the Jaffa gate would be closed—when I saw a shepherd coming to meet us, leading his flock exactly as described in the Bible. What a pretty sight it was! The man was carrying a very young lamb literally in his bosom; and the little creature looked up as he fondled it, the very picture of happiness. The shepherd wore a cloak (called Abbai by the Arabs) of broad striped woollen cloth, brown and white, the upper folds of which sheltered the lamb from the wind. Its mother followed closely behind, bleating now and then —not as if she was dissatisfied, but as if to ask her little one not to forget her. Many other sheep, and beautiful black goats with drooping ears, came on more leisurely, staying to crop the new grass. The shepherd would stop every now and then, and call to the flock in a peculiar manner—when they made haste to obey, and ran after him. They passed us, and I could hear his voice, after they were out of sight, still calling to his sheep.

"There are many more sheep and goats than there used to be in Jerusalem," said Mary, "since more Europeans have come to live here. Formerly there was scarcely ever milk to be had, and now goats are kept on purpose. The Arabs here never use cows' milk. They thing it not good, and leave it for the calves.

Goats' milk is lighter, and now it is always to be had."

"Where was that flock going? it seemed to be toward the city."

"Of course; they were going towards the city, to the stable where they are kept."

"How very odd, to take cattle into a walled city!"

"Not at all; where else should they go?"

"Stay in the fields."

"Why, they would die of cold; goats cannot bear cold. That would be all well before Christmas, before the winter has properly begun, but not so late as this. Besides, it would be unsafe, so far from any village, and outside the walls. One shepherd would not think of staying alone, for fear of robbers, and wolves, hyenas, and foxes. They never attack men; but they would carry away sheep, especially the lambs and kids."

"Then, before Christmas, they might be in the open air, as the shepherds were when our Lord was born?"

"Yes; but that was near Bethlehem, in some of the sheltered valleys; and you remember how warm and fine the weather was at Christmas. There had not been rain enough then to cool the ground too much. It is different now; the ground is thoroughly soaked."

By this time we had reached the Jaffa gate. The Europeans were hurrying in from their walk or ride, and the untidy-looking Turkish sentinel had already closed half the gate, and was waiting behind its shelter for the last bit of sunshine to disappear, that he might close the other half.

We were but just in time; and, when we had passed, the ponderous door was swung to, and the noise of the huge bolts falling into their places echoed in the lofty arched gateway. The square was deserted and silent, and we heard only our own footsteps as we crossed it on our way home.

The loneliness and stillness were very remarkable in so public a part of the city. But it was not always so in this place. One morning, early in spring, we went out for a walk, and this time the square was filled with people. A vegetable market was being held, and I afterwards found it was so every morning. Piles of immense cauliflowers and baskets of turnips were on the ground, and among them stood the peasant women whose they were, wrangling and bargaining with men in white turbans. These latter were town shopkeepers buying their day's stock. What a hubbub! It was as if they must come to blows: the women's shrill voices and frantic gestures being equally matched by the men, who vociferated and flung their arms about as if they were going to knock down everybody near them. I was afraid somebody would be hurt.

"Do look, Mary, at that man; he is going to push the woman down—that one in the blue gown and black thing down her back."

(By the by, they all wore blue gowns, and as for the black thing, I know better now, and should call it a veil; it is made of a coarse kind of crape.) My companion smiled.

"There is no fear; they never hurt each other; and the fellahât" (peasant women) "always scream."

Suddenly peace was restored; and the woman, taking up a basket of turnips, two feet high at least, poised it on her head, and followed the man down a narrow street.

"That is Aboo Ali," said Mary. "In England, I suppose, you would call him a greengrocer, for he sells vegetables. Do you know all that noise was about half a piastre?"

"How much is that?"

"About five farthings. They were bargaining with each other; and the way is, for one to begin—suppose the buyer—by offering a ridiculously low price, perhaps three piastres. Of course the seller indignantly refuses, and asks a sum as absurdly too great. 'Thirty piastres.' 'Wonderful! am I a child? Praise be to God, Aboo Ali has bought vegetables here since before Ibrahim Pasha's time: take five.' 'O thou father of a clenched fist,' (miser,) 'I will take not one para less than twenty-five piastres!' 'Greedy! I will give thee ten.' 'No! Oh, father of Ali, for the sake of thy honour, I will give them to thee for twenty.' 'Eighteen.' 'It doesn't pay me. Haven't I come all the way from Siloam to buy a new gown for the price? Give me nineteen.' 'No; eighteen and a half.'"

"And were they quarrelling about that half piastre as we passed?"

"Yes; I could hear them all the way across the square. I know that woman's voice well; she is our

milk-woman. Did you not see Aboo Ali take his beard in his hand, just before they stopped? That meant, 'Abate the half piastre for the sake of my beard:' and you see she did; for she followed him to his shop with the turnips, and he was smoking his pipe as he went before her. That is the way they always do; but they never hurt each other."

It was difficult to pick our way through the crowd of men, women, and donkeys. Down on the ground, beside the vegetables and donkeys, were several young children, brought by their mothers — sturdy little urchins of from one to two years old, in blue gowns and red caps. Some of them were adding to the uproar by squalling fiercely.

On returning from our walk we met the women going back to their villages with empty baskets. Some had a few oranges, perhaps bought for their children. One woman had her untouched basket of turnips on her head.

"There," said Mary, "she is actually carrying it all the way back, because she could not agree about the price. I daresay it was about half a piastre: now she will have all the long walk for nothing, except the pleasure of going to market and getting the news of the other villages from the women."

"What will she do with the turnips?"

"Most likely feed the cows with them: or even if she throws them away, she will consider that she has lost less than if she had sold them for half a piastre too little; and then her pride would not allow her to

sell for eighteen and a half piastres, if her brother's wife, Fatima, sold for nineteen."

Cabbage stalks and such like rubbish were the only remaining part of the busy scene; and the square had relapsed into its usual silence.

CHAPTER VII.

THE POST.

It was now the end of February, and I was becoming very impatient for some tidings of my brother. True, he had not intended leaving Egypt until March; and his plans most likely remained unaltered, for the letters could not have reached him until he was at the farthest point of his journey up the Nile; and the travellers who carried them might not overtake him at all, but meet him on the way down, after he had done all he meant to do. But that would really only make a few days' difference; and still he could not be here before March, especially as there was no direct communication between Egypt and Jaffa, and he would be obliged to go to Beyroot, and thence find his way here. Still, I longed for a letter from him; and at last my wishes were fulfilled.

After service one Sunday morning, at the beginning of March, we had scarcely left the door of the chapel when Mary exclaimed, "O Miss Russell, there is the mail!"

Under an archway I beheld a shaggy figure, bare-legged, and resting on a stout staff, his ragged locks scarcely less uncouth than the long-wooled sheepskin, which, soiled and dripping, showed that its owner had been exposed to rough weather. A pair of bright eyes showed that he felt himself an important personage, as he grinned and made his salaams.

"That is the postman, and a very good one too; he never misses."

In a moment half the congregation had gathered round him. He slowly and carefully unbundled himself, and from a series of wrappings under the sheepskin produced a parcel nicely tied up, which he delivered to Mr Andersen.

"How long have you been?"

"Four days."

Four days from Beyroot, and on foot all the way! It seemed incredible; and the man did not look a bit tired, and was going back next day.

In Mr Andersen's sitting-room the parcel was unfastened, and the letters given out to a numerous group of expectants, who had been a whole month without news of relations and friends in far-off Europe.

"Mr So-and-so; Miss So-and-so; Mrs So-and-so;" and eager hands were stretched out. One person's countenance changed on seeing her letter. The seal was black; and I perceived that some sad story was contained in that little bit of paper. Its owner immediately left the room.

At last my turn came—"Miss Russell." It was *his* handwriting, and I went off to my room trembling and shaking as I broke the seal. I never was affected thus in England by the post or at the sight of letters; but here the post was a great event. My news was good. He was well—the first few lines told me that; and I could breathe more freely. He had been ill though—in Upper Egypt, on getting our sad news; but a kind fellow-traveller, a Mr Selwyn, had done much for him—the same, by a singular coincidence, who had been with us that very morning of grief. I had not seen him again. It appears he had left Jerusalem for Egypt during my illness. They had met above the second cataract, and, liking each other, joined in an exploring expedition.

Not suspecting who my brother was, Mr Selwyn, in the course of conversation, mentioned his having been at Jerusalem. My brother asked if he had met us; and then the sad truth came out, very kindly and gently told, but too much for my poor brother; and for a few days he was too ill to begin his journey towards Palestine. But now he was well again. The delicious Nile air had completely restored him. He wrote from Alexandria two days before going on board the French steamer for Beyroot. But there was one drawback. He was to perform a twelve days' quarantine in Beyroot for having been in Egypt; and thus I must wait yet a fortnight, or perhaps longer, before seeing him. What a shame to murmur thus! Ten minutes ago I had been in agitating suspense as to whether he were yet alive

and well, and now felt disposed to grumble because he was not to be with me at once.

My next letter was from Beyroot, a fortnight afterwards. We were leaving the dining-room, when Mr Andersen was accosted by a mean-looking Arab townsman, carrying in his hand a cotton pocket-handkerchief, full of something.

"Turkish post!" exclaimed Mary. "Now, Miss Russell, you have seen the English mail: there was at least some fun in him; but what think you of the post of the Sublime Ottoman Porte?"

"Mean enough: is that the postman?"

"Oh no; you shall see him some other day. This is a man from the seraglio who delivers the letters. See how well he thinks of us: he always comes first to papa."

By this time the cotton pocket-handkerchief was spread on the ground, and a funny assemblage of papers displayed,—letters of every shape and size, from a long handsome envelope (which, Mr Andersen told the man, was for the British consul; for, though directed in Arabic as well as in English, the man could read neither) to little things about two inches square, covered all over with writing. They were Hebrew letters; and Mr Andersen told the postman the names of the various persons to whom they were addressed. "Rabbi Judah ben Itzchak, (Isaac;) Rabbi Yosef Warsawer, (from Warsaw;) Rabbi Abraham el Bagdadee, (from Bagdad.") I was so delighted in watching the facility with which Mr Andersen was

reading one after another—Arabic, Hebrew, and even Turkish crabbed-looking inscriptions—that I forgot my own letter, until there appeared an English-looking envelope. No—Miss Graves was the direction. Then came one in German, for an old couple; then one for the Reverendissimo of the Latin Convent; another for the Greek Archimandrite Basilius, (written in Greek.) Was there ever such a collection of letters?

At last, and at the bottom, were three for Mr Andersen himself, but none for me. I felt ready to cry. The man gathered up his parcel and went off.

"Now," said Mary, "that man, though he cannot read or write, will deliver all his letters accurately. He knows that he has letters for certain people, and he won't forget any of them, but go to each, and let him pick out his own."

Mr Andersen opened his letters, thinking that perhaps mine would be enclosed. No. "But"—and he read—"I am happy to tell you that Mr Russell is well. He is in quarantine, and expects to leave Beyroot in about a week. This is from Mr Brown, our man of business."

Immediately afterwards, in came a grand fellow, in a scarlet jacket and belt full of pistols, with salaams from the consul to the English lady; and this letter had come in one from the Consul-General of Beyroot." So Mary translated the message for me. It was my brother's letter; and again I went off to my own room to read it. He was out of quarantine, but could not yet find a steamer coming down to Jaffa. A Turkish

steamer was expected to bring pilgrims for Easter, and then he thought he might get a passage. So this very week he would most likely be here; for next Sunday would be Easter day.

CHAPTER VIII.

BAPTISM OF RABBI ABRAHAM AND HIS DAUGHTER RACHEL.

"Poor nation, whose sweet sap and juice
Our scions have purloin'd, and left you dry;
Whose streams we got by the apostles' sluice
And use in baptism, while ye pine and die;
Who, by not keeping, once became a debtor,
And now, by keeping, lose the letter.

"Oh that my prayers—mine, alas!
Oh that some angel might a trumpet sound,
At which the Church, falling upon her face,
Should cry so loud, until the trump were drown'd,
And, by that cry of her dear Lord, obtain
That your sweet sap might come again!"

GEORGE HERBERT.

PASSION-WEEK in Jerusalem. There was daily service in our little chapel, very quiet and very solemn. On Thursday evening I spent some time on the terrace by myself, and shall never forget that season.

The full Passover moon shone with extraordinary power upon the city, and brought out distinctly the well-known top of the Mount of Olives. Gethsemane

could not be seen; but I knew where it lay—down among the black shadows at the foot of the mountain. Perfect silence left my mind undisturbed to dwell upon the awful scenes which passed within yonder space eighteen hundred years ago. And many of the actors in those events were almost certainly sleeping in the dust in yonder Valley of Jehoshaphat. Had they repented on the preaching of Peter? or been moved by the testimony of the other apostles?

How few of the men, women, and children now living and dying in Jerusalem, among that confused mass of houses before me, were believers in Him who then suffered for them and for us! Oh for the gift of tongues—the power granted to the apostles to speak of these things to every man in his own language! How wonderful it is, that faith should be granted to us in far-off England, while those who live upon the very spot consecrated by these wonderful transactions are ignorant and unbelieving!

A sound of men's voices broke the stillness. Turning, I saw a bright light below, in an upper room, in one of the Jewish houses on Mount Zion. It was a Jewish family keeping the Passover; and they were chanting—most likely in Hebrew, as their forefathers, and perhaps our Lord and His apostles had done, on such a night as this.

The service of the next day was attended by all the Hebrew Christians of the congregation. Surely, since the dispersion of the Jews, there had not been so many assembled on Mount Zion! and on that morn-

ing two more were added to the number. A Rabbi Abraham and his young daughter Rachel had desired to become Christians. They had been carefully instructed by Mr Andersen; and this morning they were baptized.

This part of the service was in German, for Rachel's sake, as she could speak nothing else. Two of the other sponsors were Hebrew Christians.

The congregation did not merely look on, but joined with the utmost fervour in the prayers. Rabbi Abraham — a venerable man, of noble, decided countenance — spoke firmly; but poor Rachel could scarcely keep back her tears, or make her voice heard; and yet she was so in earnest, poor child, that she strove, in spite of her timidity, to answer for herself. Her lovely face was flushed; and her eyes, the soft, shy expression of which were remarkable when I had seen her before, were now lighted up with intense feeling.

Poor things! they had both suffered for confessing their faith in Christ; and their sufferings were not yet over.

Their family had been broken up; the dearest ties rent asunder; and it was at the cost of a beloved wife and two only sons that this poor man had obeyed the dictates of his conscience. It must be a terrible moment to a Jew, when the truth that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, forces itself upon him, and when all the agonising consequences that must follow this conviction rush upon his mind,—anger, scorn, con-

tempt, and, finally, separation from the friends of his youth; the grief and keen distress inflicted upon them; and, for himself, no prospect but to go out from among his kindred, among strangers, penniless and friendless.

Could our own faith in Christianity bear such a test as this? Thank God that it has never been tried!

After church, Rabbi Abraham came to see Mr Andersen. His wife was ill. Grief and horror at her husband becoming a Christian had brought on fever. Now some one had come to tell him that, in her delirium, she was calling for him. He was fondly attached to her.

"Sir," he said, on seeing Mr Andersen, "what shall I do? what shall I do? The day that she left me she went to Rabbi Zalman's house, and she is there still."

"I am afraid of your going there, Abraham. Remember the last day you were there."

"Sir, I am not afraid. I must see her before she dies."

He could say no more. His voice was choked, and tears would not be kept back. He turned away his face. Rachel wept bitterly. Soon he rose. His face was very pale; but he spoke in a firm low tone.

"Sir, I *must* see her; perhaps she will listen to me now!"

"Then I will go with you, Abraham," said Mr Andersen. "I dare not trust you there alone."

Rachel was standing by her father's side. She was always by his side. He looked at us. He could not

take her with him. Mrs Andersen rose and took her hands.

"My child, stay with me until your father returns."

"They will beat him: I must go; oh, I must go!" she cried wildly. "They will not kill him if I am there."

"They will not do him any harm, my dear. Mr Andersen will not leave him a moment."

". . . . And my mother, she knows no one but me when she is ill. Father, take me; she will speak to me, she will surely know me!"

The poor man shook his head, and Mrs Andersen gently detained her, while her father and Mr Andersen left the house.

Mary told me that the last day Rabbi Abraham had been in the Jewish quarter, he had barely escaped with his life.

"How so? Surely they would not lay violent hands on him!"

"Why, you know they are so excitable; and then they would do anything to save him from becoming a Christian. They think him lost for this world and the next when that has happened; but, if he dies a Jew, he will be saved."

"And what did they do to him?"

"He had been for some time sure that he ought to become a Christian. His mind was quite made up; but he was in the agonies of fear as to how his wife would bear it. He says that the words, 'He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy

of Me,' gave him no rest by day or by night; and so one day he told her. At first she did not understand him; but when she did, she fainted. He thought she was dead; and so did poor Rachel, who is intensely fond of her mother. At last she recovered, and began to tear her hair and wring her hands; but she did not weep or speak. Poor Abraham tried to explain to her as well as he could, that he was not going to become an idolater; that the Messiah was the Son of David; and that David, and Moses, and all the prophets had believed in Him. But she answered nothing.

"Then he begged her to calm herself, for that he would be a better husband to her than before; and that she might remain a Jewess until she thought as he did. He should not disturb her, if she could not believe as he did; he should love her all the same. Then she began to weep; for she was very fond of him; but she would not consent to remain with him. He entreated her to do nothing hastily, but to wait and hear him first. She answered nothing, but beat on her breast, and wept, and said, 'Oh, my father, my father!'—for her father had been a very great Rabbi in Russia; and she meant that this disgrace to her father was more bitter than her own sorrow.

"Then Rabbi Abraham thought, perhaps, if he left her a while, she would recover, and that then she would listen to him: and it was time for prayers in the synagogue; so he thought he would go there once more, before it became known, and all his friends hated him and turned their backs upon him. And he

told Rachel to take care of her mother and little brothers until he came back.

"'While he was in the synagogue, before the prayers were over, he saw a man come in hastily, and say something to the principal Rabbis, and that they were much disturbed, and glanced at him with flashing eyes. His heart smote him. It was already known! Suddenly candles were lighted, and an excommunication pronounced against him, if he should forsake the faith of Israel, and become an idolater—'a destroyed one,' as they call it. The candles were put out, and the most awful curses were uttered by the congregation as with one voice. He was terrified, and yet had courage to speak. He felt that now was the time, or never; and began—

"'Hear me, brethren. I am not an idolater; God forbid. I have found that Moses and the prophets speak of the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.'

"The uproar then became frightful. Curses and blows fell on him like hail; and his life was saved only by his being pushed down the stairs near which he was standing, and he thus gained the street before the others could follow. He ran home, but his wife was not there. She and his two boys had disappeared; but Rachel was on the ground, in the extremity of grief. She had heard and believed the words spoken to her mother, and resolved, though it nearly broke her heart, to let her and her brothers go alone, and abide with her father.

"Rabbi Abraham was shocked to find that, in her

excitement and terror, his wife had not only left him, but had gone to the house of Rabbi Zalman, a strictly pious and very fanatic Jew. There was no time to lose. In a few minutes the whole Jewish quarter would be in an uproar. He took Rachel by the hand, and came here to our house. We were very much surprised. Papa had had one or two conversations with him before; but he was so zealous an opposer of anything like Christianity, that he had no hope of convincing him. It seems that he had thought over what had been said, until he could doubt no more; and here he was. But his first thought was for his wife and children. He begged papa to help him in obtaining them; or, at least, that they might live in some house where he could go and see them when he liked, so as gradually to make his wife understand what the change in him was. Papa has done all he could, both with the Jewish Rabbis and with the Pasha, but without success; and I am very much afraid poor Abraham will never see either his wife or his boys again. She was very ill, but was getting better. I fear she is worse again."

The afternoon passed away, and neither Rabbi Abraham nor Mr Andersen came back. At first Rachel had seemed calm: she wept no more, and answered what was said to her; but as evening came on, she seemed to forget where she was. She sat fixed and silent, and did not hear when we spoke to her, but seemed straining her ear for the sound of her father's footsteps.

At last Mrs Andersen also became uneasy at her husband's prolonged absence, and sent Girius with a lantern to look for his master.

Girius did not much like going into the Jewish quarter, for he was a Greek, and had all the antipathy to the Jews which the Greeks in these countries feel. I do not mean that he was a native of Greece, (as I myself thought at first,) but an Arab belonging to the Greek Church. However, he went grumbling, and hoping he should be back in time for going to the services at the Holy Sepulchre, which were about commencing.

He soon returned, and brought a little note from Mr Andersen, saying that "there was nothing to fear, they were safe—but had been refused admittance to the house where Rabbi Abraham's wife was; but he could not draw the poor man away from the spot; and he was now standing in a dark archway, within sight and hearing of the chamber where his wife lay. There was no great danger of their being observed or molested; but he could not leave him alone."

Mary and Mrs Andersen spoke to Rachel, and told her that her father was safe, but could not come yet. She looked at them and said, "Thank you," and relapsed into her former state. They tried to get her to take food; it was no use: and thus the evening wore away, and the chill, strange hours of midnight came on.

Mary brought a cushion and laid it down on the table beside which Rachel was sitting, and presently

the poor weary head sank down upon it, and she slept the deep sleep which is rarely denied to youth.

We put a mantle over her, and watched again for several hours. It was well that Rachel slept, for at last her father came back, tenderly led, and supported by Mr Andersen. They took him to another chamber. He was in the depths of affliction. They had stood out there in the dark archway, and listened and heard the poor wife calling for her husband by name, until her voice was no more heard, and the dread chant was raised by the Jews standing around her bed—"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord;" and this was repeated, according to their custom, in the ears of the dying person, until life was gone,—thus assisting the soul to make solemn confession of its faith in the one true God, while in the act of passing into His presence.

Mr Andersen told us that, from the time when the pathetic entreaties of the poor man for admittance to his wife had been roughly refused by the people of the house, Rabbi Abraham had not spoken until now. He had stood motionless—his hands folded, and seemingly in prayer. But, as the too familiar sound fell upon his ear, he started, and joined in the words; but added, "and Jesus of Nazareth is His anointed One. O Son of David have mercy upon her!" Then all was still, and he suffered Mr Andersen to lead him away.

We were afraid to disturb Rachel, but persuaded Mrs Andersen to go to rest; and Mary and I by

turns lay down to sleep, while one sat by the poor girl. It was my turn as the morning broke, and I watched the progress of dawn; and was absorbed in thinking of that morning after Good-Friday, eighteen hundred years ago, when Roman soldiers were seated watching the sealed tomb; and beheld the dawn brighten into day, and the sun rise over those very hills on which my eyes now rested.

The door was gently opened, and Rabbi Abraham came to look for his child. I was shocked at seeing that his beard and hair, which only the day before had been jet black, had become grey. Sorrow had done its work; and not only there, but had left deep furrows in his cheeks. Yet there was comfort for him; and his eye caught something of the brightness which rested on his daughter's head. The sun rose just as he came into the room, and its rays fell full upon her beautiful golden hair, and played over her pale face. I left the room.

CHAPTER IX.

EASTER DISTURBANCES—MY BROTHER'S ARRIVAL.

"The dispute about religion and the practice of it seldom go together."—YOUNG.

ON my way down stairs to the garden, to enjoy the early breath of morning, a strange sight met my eyes

in the court. It was Girius, led in by some friends—pale, bruised, his clothes torn, and disfigured with blood. What could have happened to him? He seemed a quiet fellow, not likely to get into a quarrel; and the last time I had seen him he was on his way to church.

Mr Andersen came down, prepared to go to Hebrew service, and seemed as much astonished as myself. Girius would not say much; but his friends were full of gesticulation, and told a long story, showing the bruises and damage which Girius had suffered—fortunately not on a dangerous part of his head; and his right wrist was only sprained and swollen—not, as they seemed to think, broken.

But there was no time for explanation until breakfast, when I heard the whole story; and shocking enough it was. There had been a great fight the evening before in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—during the very service itself—between the Greeks and the Latins: both parties had come to blows, and several persons were severely hurt.

"What could have been the cause?" I asked.

"Why," said Mr Andersen, "I have only the Greek version of the story, and it would not be fair to judge by that. Girius and his friends say that the Latins tried by force to take away an embroidered carpet from off the place of Calvary where the cross of our Saviour was believed to have stood, and that this carpet belonged to the Greeks, and they would not allow it to be taken away. But I do not see how the Latins

could carry on their service without removing this carpet; for it would be impossible to put the crucifix into its place while it was there. Girius also says that the Latins tore up the piece of wood, with silver plate and inscription, from the Calvary to fight with; but this also seems almost incredible."

Later in the day we found, however, that this last tale was true; and we heard the Latin version of the affair through the dragoman of the English consulate, who is a Latin Arab. He speaks the most detestable French, but I contrived to understand his story. It was as Mr Andersen had supposed. The Latins could not proceed with their service without removing the carpet, which the Greeks who were present stoutly refused to do; alleging that the Latins would replace it by one of their own, and then claim the right to keep it there. At last, finding remonstrances unavailing, one of the Latin monks officiating, proceeded to remove it; and this was the signal for a shower of blows from the Greeks, and a general scuffle ensued. Many of the Greek monks present had cudgels in their hands, and those who had not tore down huge wax candles instead. Knives were brandished and used. One of the principal monks of the Latin Convent was pitched over the gallery into the church below, and at first it was thought he was killed. The fight raged in spite of all the Turkish soldiers present could do, until the Pasha himself arrived with fresh troops. An express had been sent for his Excellency, and he speedily came with six hundred men, and by force put an end to the

combat—while the bells were ringing on both sides, to enlist fresh Greeks and Latins in the holy cause.

What a dreadful occurrence! I remember having heard in England of such things, but scarcely believed them, and thought there must be exaggeration; but here were the eye-witnesses and sufferers; so that it was impossible to doubt that there had been a fight. Later in the day some English travellers called on Mrs Andersen, and one gentleman bore very distinct marks of having been both bruised and frightened. He had been in some danger of his life in the crowd.

All the strange events passing around did not make me forget that on this day I might expect the arrival of my brother. He was to have landed at Jaffa the day before.

In the afternoon Mr Andersen, and one or two gentlemen living here, rode out on the Jaffa road to meet him; and a short time before sunset the trampling of horses and tinkling of mule-bells told that he had come.

. . . . . .

My brother took up his quarters at the same hotel in which my first few weeks had been spent. My kind friends insisted on my remaining with them for the present, as being quieter than a hotel.

I shall give the events of the next few days by extracting from my brother's journal:—

April 12—Easter Sunday.

Awakened by guns and pistols fired in the streets, by way of rejoicing. This is Latin Easter, but Greek

Palm Sunday. Divine service in the English temporary chapel. Congregation between sixty and seventy. In the afternoon walked out, the wind cold and stormy.

We went to the English burial-ground, and were greatly shocked to find it in so profane a condition—so rude, so open to the road, without any protection from cattle or malicious foes, and without any memorials to my dear father, the bishop, or others. This must be attended to, and every means tried for getting permission to wall it in.

My first day in Jerusalem. A day of days, whose mingled feelings I shall never again experience, but I cannot analyse or describe them. My heart has been stirred within me.

Easter Monday.

Afternoon, we walked around the walls of the city, by the Zion Gate, to the north-east. How steep is the descent from Mount Moriah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat! In surveying the enormous stones of the temple wall, we were of opinion that, though undoubtedly belonging to the ancient wall, most, if not every single one, have been thrown down, and since built in again. Some are lying upon their sides, others quite reversed; and, among the larger masses, there are spaces filled in with much smaller stones, which could not have been inserted afterwards. In some parts of the city wall, however, these patchings of small stones look as if they filled up a breach, which might have been caused by a huge battering-ram; and one can almost fancy the hole

made by the mighty engines of the besiegers. Fearing the sun might set before our making the whole circuit of the city, we entered by the gate of St Stephen, (after looking across to Gethsemane and the road to Bethany.) Looked at the supposed Bethesda, near the entrance of the sacred enclosure. Passed along the *Via dolorosa* —seeing, of course, the *Ecce homo* window; the stones which cried out; the impression of the Saviour's and of Mary's hands in separate streets, where each leaned against the walls of houses; the house of Dives, &c.

I have had no time this day to think or feel anything, at least in the city. It was otherwise when standing on Mount Moriah, looking across the deep valley towards Olivet and Gethsemane.

I shall hope to be much in the open air, and look at these scenes; in all seasons, at all times; by night, and in the day; by the early sunlight, and when long shadows fall across the landscape; when cloud and storm invest the mountains with grandeur, and when all the outlines are rounded in the moonlight; when the spring flowers begin to blossom, as well as in the clear heat of summer, when the air quivers, and the flies dance, and the fruits are ripening.

Then will my mind be steeped in the influences peculiar to the sounds and sights, and the very air, of the Holy Land. Then I may begin to think of rendering some of those ideas which have so long floated vaguely in my imagination; and when I have learned to know something of the people—their manners of thought and of speech, their customs and their character—

then I may be able to paint real pictures of Scripture history.

. . . . . .

It was almost dark when we arrived at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. We entered, and saw the stone of unction—the tomb. Oh, how much more impressive it would have been had the ancient tomb been left unadorned—unaltered, an empty tomb—to testify of a risen Saviour!

I speak as if there were no doubt that this is the very spot. I have not yet had time or opportunity to examine the question of its identity. It is, at least, a memorial *very near* the spot. And how many hundreds and thousands of devout Christians have knelt here, and blessed God for "His inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ!"

One of the names for this church is peculiarly affecting—the Church of the Resurrection.

As night was coming on, the priests began to light the lamps; and numbers of Greek devotees were coming in for their night services, bringing their mattresses with them.

14*th.*—Called upon a Russian gentleman with whom I had travelled from Beyroot, who was here for Easter. Found him in the Greek Convent. He took me for introduction to his "Beatitude," the Greek Patriarch. Conversation turned upon the fight in the church, of which I now heard the Greek version; and saw the silver-inscribed board which usually indicates where

the rock of Calvary was rent. This piece the Latins had taken up to fight with; and, indeed, one end of it was most profanely smashed.

His "Beatitude" is a fine, gentlemanly old personage, and wore a decoration over his plain serge robe. It consisted of an exquisite enamel painting (perhaps 5 inches by 3) of the Redeemer holding the orb. It was surrounded by abundance of diamonds and large emeralds; these again surmounted by an imperial crown, as large as the painting, made of rich brilliant diamonds and larger emeralds than the rest.

16*th.*—Walked to the Church of the Ascension, on the Mount of Olives, to see the Dead Sea. It looks as if it lay at one's feet; and one can scarcely imagine it to be nearly thirty miles off. How astonishing the scenery in every direction! how pure and transparent the atmosphere! and oh, the colouring, the exquisite gradations of tint, from gray to blue, to violet and purple! Who will believe me if I paint landscape in such colours? But they are the true colours, and I *mean* to try and paint them.

CHAPTER X.

HOUSE HUNTING.

EASTER was now past—both ours and the Greek Easter. The travellers had departed; the pilgrims were all gone, and Jerusalem was returned to its usual silence.

We began to consider our plans for the future. Walter had, as I expected, resolved on remaining in Palestine for several months, in order to paint the picture of which my father had spoken, and perhaps others which he himself wished to attempt. He loved painting above all things, and usually succeeded in carrying out the ideas which he had formed about his subjects. But in this country he was more diffident of success than I had ever known him before. He dreaded failure as a kind of profanation of subjects which deserve the highest reverence and most careful treatment. Sometimes he almost abandoned the thought; and again, when, during some ride or walk in the beautiful country around Jerusalem, we had been drinking in the spirit of the scene and recalling the Scripture histories which belonged to it, he would seize his pencil and produce some sketch of true poetic feeling.

We had been rambling one evening among the little valleys which join the Kedron. The sun was hot on the western side of the city; but here it was cool and delightful, owing to the shade cast by the high mountains. My hands were filled with wild mignionette and foxglove, new flowers which I had not yet met with here. We sat down to rest and talk undisturbedly over our plans in a quiet spot, where neither the beautiful view nor passers-by should distract our attention.

"And now, Emily, how is it to be? do you vote for lodgings or a house?"

"I vote for a house, on the whole, as being most quiet

for your painting; but servants—I am afraid they will be troublesome, and I can't speak to them."

"Oh, you can make signs; and if they do make mistakes, and give us tea in a soup tureen, or anything of that sort, we must not mind it too much."

"Where should you like the house to be?"

"Down somewhere near the Damascus Gate, in the Moslem quarter. It is so quiet there, and more Oriental than up in the Christian part."

"I have observed that already. Down there you never see a European, but black slaves chatter at their masters' doors: and the cry of the muezzin divides the day and night into portions; while, up in the Christian quarter, one hears nothing unless one is close enough to catch the tinkling of a bell inside the convent; and the people, when you do see any, have a prim, pinched look, which spoils them. Their clothes are scantier too, and have not the full, flowing look of the Moslem robes down at my end of the town. I met a young fellow near the Latin Convent yesterday, wearing European gloves and high-heeled shoes. Instead of the Oriental salaam, he pushed his red cap back off his forehead, so as to show his shaven pate, while he made a clumsy bow. I hope this is not a specimen of what young Syria is going to be. They will be quite spoilt."

"There is more activity about them though. I begin to distinguish a Christian from a Moslem by his walk."

"That's because the Moslem is too proud to walk fast. Don't you remember the Arab proverb Mary Andersen told us the other day, "Haste comes from

the devil?" But we have got far away from our house that is to be. For how long must we take it—one year? Very well. How delightful it will be to spend a whole year in Jerusalem!"

So it was settled, and Walter and I began house-hunting in Jerusalem.

How to set about it was the difficulty. We told our plan to Mr and Mrs Andersen, and he undertook to obtain information from his Arab secretary, but told us that we must be prepared to pay down the rent beforehand for the whole term of the lease; for that Moslems, who are the principal house-owners in Jerusalem, only let their houses for the sake of a large sum of money, with which they increase their trade or their soap factories.

And so it proved. In a day or two Aboo Michael, the secretary, appeared to tell of his success. He had found several houses. One was belonging to Mahmoud Effendi, and he would let it for fifteen years for 45,000 piastres, all paid in advance, for he was going to set up a soap factory, and required capital. It contained sixteen rooms. This was too large for us.

Another had a small house of three rooms, which he would let for five years for 10,000 piastres, for he was building a new divan—*i.e.*, saloon—in his own house, and needed money. A third had a nice house of five rooms, which he would let for two years for 7000 piastres, for he wished to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and this would provide the funds. Another, Suleiman el Nabulsee, (Solomon from Nablous,) wished to let his

house because his brother-in-law was in prison for a crime, and the money would release him.

Aboo Michael explained that a poor Morocco Jew was going down to Jaffa one night, and this man, who had some quarrel with him, waylaid and murdered him in the mountain pass.

"Why," said Mrs Andersen, "that must have been the night that Mr Benson and Mr Richards were going to Jaffa. They said that they met two suspicious-looking fellows, and soon after found the poor creature lying by the roadside."

Aboo Michael confirmed this, and explained that the Jews had exerted sufficient influence to get the murderer convicted and put into prison, but had been afraid of revenge, in case they should claim blood; therefore they only asked for the price of blood.

"Has blood a price in this country?" asked Walter.

"Oh yes," said Mr Andersen, who just then came in, "there are various prices for blood. The life of a man has one price, but of a woman only half. When a person has been killed, and the murderer convicted, the judge asks the nearest relations if they will have blood or money. If they answer blood, the criminal must be executed; if money, the man is put into prison until he, or his friends for him, pay. The price of blood varies. The law says 30,000 drachmas of silver; but the kâdi has decided that, as it is not said which kind of silver, this is left to the discretion of the judge, according to the circumstances of the case. It may be wrought silver of very great value; or it may be inferior

silver, alloyed with copper, and of comparatively little value. The common rate is 30,000 piastres for the life of a man."

Mr Andersen, on hearing the case of the man who wanted to let his house and pay the price of blood with the money, sternly rebuked his secretary for imagining that he, or any friends of his, would have anything to do with so shocking an affair. We were glad to consider the merits of the other houses. Could we see them? Yes, no doubt; and Aboo Michael went off to get the keys. He was a singular-looking man. A sharp, restless pair of small black eyes peeped out from under the shade of a very full black turban. He had a down look, but was evidently very quick and clever. His dress was good, but of sober colours—the outer cloth robe dark green, approaching to black; and the only gay thing about him were his scarlet shoes. Mary told us that, formerly, Christians were not allowed to wear red shoes or gay-coloured dress, on pain of ill-usage by the Moslems; but that, since the Egyptians had been in the country, this was improved. His girdle was a rich shawl; but even this was not gay, and in it was stuck his metal ink-horn.

Presently he returned, bearing a huge bunch of keys, varying in length from eight to twelve inches, and very rude in their form. The two houses which we wished to see were those of three rooms and of five rooms; but the term of the lease offered was too long, and the expense too great for us.

Mr Andersen explained that most likely the terms

would be abated, for that it is customary to ask much more than people intend to take.

"Don't you remember the basket of turnips?" said Mary. "These effendies have not one bit more shame than the fellahât, (peasant women.) They will bargain just as keenly for ten piastres as the women do for ten paras."

Mary came with us as interpreter, and told us that effendies are the *gentlemen* among the townspeople. "Indeed, they would call themselves the nobility. They are of old families, and of course all Moslems."

"Are they Arabs or Turks?"

"Not Turks. There are very few Turks in Jerusalem—only the pasha, the kâdi, and the soldiers. The effendies are Arabs, and descendants of those who came into the country at the invasion of the Caliph Omar. Most of them say they can trace their genealogy all the way down in direct descent, and are intensely proud of it; but they are poorer than they used to be, or they would not let their houses."

"What other classes are there among the natives?" asked Walter.

"Among the Moslems? There are, next to the effendies, those who call themselves bek or bey. That stands for gentleman. And then come the merchants or khawajāt."

"Why, I thought khawajah meant 'Mr.' They call me Khawajah Roosell."

"They would not call one of themselves so. Khawajah means, or is used for, merchant; but you see

most of the Christians here are merchants, and so used the Europeans in the Levant to be, and thus they have been called khawajah; but it is not a proper title of respect."

"What would be my title, then?"

"Bey or bek. I think, Russell Bek."

"Oh no," said I; "let it be Walter Bek."

"Very good—Walter Bek; and you, Emily?"

"Oh, I know my name already. I am Sitt Emily."

"They will certainly turn you," said Mary, "into Sitt Aminah, which is a common Moslem name, meaning 'faithful.'"

"Very well; I have no objection. It is rather pretty—the Lady Aminah."

We had, meanwhile, been going in and out among curious narrow streets, or rather lanes, with high blank walls, and here and there a low door. Our guide stopped at one of these; and while he was examining his huge bunch of keys in search of the right one, we had leisure to observe that, though the door was of common wood, broken and old, the lintel across the doorway was of fine white marble—some relic of ancient Jerusalem.

"Which house is this?" asked Mary.

"It is the one of three rooms, and belongs to Omar Effendi," said Aboo Michael, opening the door as he spoke, and admitting us into a small paved court, in one corner of which was a stone staircase, more dilapidated than usual. Mounting this, we came upon a still smaller paved terrace, surrounded by high walls,

from which there was not the slightest view; and yet it was not close. I wondered for a moment how it could be so airy—until Walter spied a number of small holes with which the wall was perforated. Going to examine these, we found that the upper part of the wall was not built of stone, but composed of a number of pottery cylinders laid horizontally, and arranged in patterns. Only as much mortar had been used as would support and keep them together; so that here we had a light wall and also a transparent one. For through these holes the breeze played freely, and a good deal of light was admitted.

"What a nice invention!" said my brother.

"Perhaps you would not say so, Mr Russell," replied Mary, "if you knew the use of it. That wall is meant to keep inquisitive folks from peeping over into their neighbours' house. Just try and look down into the next house, and see what those women are squabbling about."

"I can't; these things lie so, that I can only look straight forward and see the sky."

"Try one higher up."

"It 's all the same; they all point, like so many telescopes, to the sky."

"So you see people may be very near neighbours, and know each other's voices perfectly well, and yet never get a glimpse of each other. Now let us go into the rooms."

Three rickety doors opened into as many rooms. Small and dingy-looking the two first were, and the

only window in each was obscured by a close lattice of wood, painted dark brown. There was no glass in the windows. The third room turned out to be a little place, four feet by three—which Mary said was the kitchen; so this would not do.

And we locked it all up, and set off in search of the five-roomed house. But before we had got far, Aboo Michael stopped, and said, "I know another house near this, which has a garden and a good view of the harem."

Presently we reached a door. He took up a stone, and began knocking with it, until a shrill voice within cried out, "Meen?" (who is there?) "Eftahhee," (open,) was the answer. And then there was a noise of wooden pattens, and the door was opened by a tall negress, gaily dressed in pink print. After some talk with Aboo Michael, she went off into the house, clattering over the pavement, which had been newly washed, and looked delightfully cool. Peeping in, I saw that the court was spacious, and shaded by a large pomegranate-tree in the centre. Its lovely scarlet blossoms were new to me, and were exquisitely contrasted by the glossy green of the foliage. Seated on a bit of mat, in its shade, was an old woman, (a black slave,) picking wheat, which was spread on a broad copper tray before her on the ground. A rosy little child, very fair, and with laughing eyes and dimpled cheeks, was playing by her side.

"I daresay that old woman has been in the family since her master was a child like that; see how fond she is of the little fellow."

"Are there many slaves in Jerusalem?" asked Walter.

"Oh yes; among the Moslems, every family has several. The richer they are the more they have. They are their only servants. They are all fat and well clothed, if you observe. Sometimes, I believe, they get a beating; but generally they seem very happy. And I have heard that very often old slaves, who have lived long in the family, become, in fact, master and mistress of the household. They keep the keys, and manage the stores, and bring up the children. That old woman there looks as if she did much as she liked."

And so it seemed; for she clapped her hands, and another—a girl, whose white teeth were perpetually visible by reason of the broad grin on her face—came running to her, and on being ordered, took up the copper tray and carried it off on her head, while the old woman began to smoke a pipe which lay by her side.

And now our portress returned, accompanied by a boy of about thirteen, also black, but very handsome, tall, well made, and richly dressed in a scarlet jacket embroidered with gold. Everything about him was smart and in good condition.

"Almâz will go with you," said the woman. "My lord is at the seraglio, and will not return until noon."

The boy said something to her, and she then asked us to return and drink coffee with her lord when he came home.

"Did you observe what that boy called her?" said Mary, as we walked on.

"Looloo, I think."

"Yes; that means pearl. They are very fond of giving names of precious stones to their slaves. That boy's name is Diamond; but proper names, such as Mohammed, Ali, Omar, they never give to a slave."

"Why," said Walter, "the other day I heard a slave near our hotel called Abdallah."

"Yes; but that very name has the word slave in it. It is composed of two words: 'Abd,' slave of; 'Allah,' God. There are many such in Arabic: 'Abderrahheem,' slave of the merciful; and so on."

"But are such names only given to slaves?"

"Other persons also use them; and, indeed, they are fond of them. The kâdi's name is 'Abd-el-Wahhad,' slave of the One, (*i.e.*, God;) and the sultan's name is 'Abd-al-Mejid,' slave of the Glorious. All these are derived from the ninety-nine attributes of God, and are well understood by every child."

Almâz had got to the house, and the door stood open to receive us. It opened upon a piece of ground called a garden; and certainly a garden might be made of it; but at present a few tangled rose-bushes and a noble palm-tree were its only ornaments. I gathered a rose; it was very fragrant.

"By the by, Miss Russell, we must take you to the Valley of Roses," said Mary; "they will be in their beauty now."

"Where is that? it sounds very delightful."

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"Not far; about an hour's ride."

We had crossed the garden, and entered the house. It was in a very ruinous condition. The rooms had been fine, and some had been paved with marble; but the floors were broken, the latticees tumbling from the windows, and suspicious cracks in one or two of the domes spoke of speedy ruin yet more complete.

How sad to see a place thus! An alcove, formerly very pretty, and communicating with the garden by steps, was now occupied by a horse, which was tethered to the broken fountain in the middle.

The creature was very tame, and neighed at little Almâz, who rubbed his nose and patted him, while we pushed past into what had been the principal room. It was vaulted and lofty; the edges of the groined arches had been ornamented with a light pattern of vine leaves, painted in two shades of blue. But here also all was going to decay.

There were windows on three sides of the room, which gave it a lantern sort of effect; but those on the south and west were shaded by close lattices. The east windows overlooked the temple enclosure, and one glance through them riveted us to the spot. We seemed to be in the very ground itself. So close was it, that we could hear what the women and children, who were walking and sitting on the soft green grass, were saying.

Their bright dresses and white veils gleamed among the grand old cypress-trees. I saw our little Almâz running along the slope; and presently he returned,

bringing us a few small sprays of cypress from the trees. Oh, how very precious would be those leaves to our friends in England—from the ground where the temple had stood, and where our Lord had so often, often walked!

The beauty of the temple enclosure is very great. From the green sward marble steps lead up on every side to the platform on which the mosque stands. I had no idea before of the rich decoration of the building itself. The whole is incrusted with costly marble, varied with tiles of blue and white; and all round the upper part run Arabic inscriptions in fine flowing characters. There is nothing showy or gay about the building, at least outside; but the greens and blues blend and harmonise with each other, and with the weather-tinted marble of the graceful colonnades, and of the platform itself; and this again contrasts with the brilliant emerald hues of the turf. The glorious sun lights up the whole; casts deep shadows from the trees; touches the scarlet, and blue, and crimson dresses of the people, and glitters on the gilt crescent which rears itself arrogantly from the highest pinnacle against the sky—so cloudless, so pure a blue, that it seems to rise higher and higher as you gaze.

We were fascinated, and stood, and looked, and forgot where we were. What priest or prince had lived here in ancient times to enjoy this superb view of the holy place?

Now I understood why there was no gate or door permitted to be on this west side of the temple. It

was turned towards the east, and only open on that side.

Walter had pulled out paper and pencil, and was sketching for his life. He seemed to be afraid that the whole was an illusion, and would vanish before he could get it on paper.

"Please," said I, "will you ask Aboo Michael if the owner would repair this house for us?—and then about the rent, would it be very extravagant?"

Aboo Michael said he had formerly spoken with the owner, when another family were looking for a house, and that he had then asked for as much money as would put the house into complete repair; and that this should be considered as rent for so many years, till it was made up.—Forty-eight thousand piastres for twelve years.

"We can't take a house for twelve years, *Emily*; that is out of the question; and this is too large for us."

This was true; but I quitted it with regret. How delightful this sitting-room would have been! And the garden too could have been made very pretty; and then to have a palm-tree of one's own!

But we were obliged to continue our search.

There still remained the five-roomed house, whose owner wished to go to Mecca; and thither we bent our steps.

"This appears to have been a remarkable street," said Walter, "and of the Saracenic age. Look at that doorway, and the rich moulding of the arch."

"This street was formerly the best part of the Moslem quarter," said Mary; "it runs parallel to the mosque enclosure. The houses are a good deal decayed, but I believe some of them are still very fine."

"See here, this one must have been a palace. Look at the beauty of the stones of which it is built, and how perfectly they are cut. Just see that lovely circular window! Why, those other windows and the doorway are built in alternate courses of red and black stone!"

"Here is something finer still, brother. Look at this charming little fountain; but not a drop of water. What a pity! If I could, I would set that fountain flowing again. How beautiful it would look—clear fresh water pouring from beneath that exquisite little arch!"

"The Turks and Arabs here would not allow you to do any such thing, Miss Russell; they would be too jealous of a European getting any influence, and would rather it remained a ruin as you see it."

The design of the fountain, and one or two others which we saw, was simple. A Saracenic arch in stone, with Arabesque mouldings of graceful pattern, formed a kind of roof to an oblong basin or trough, also in stone. The pipes, or mouths, whence the water flowed, were cut in a slab of white marble.

Walter stopped many times to copy some of the ornamentation—very perfect as specimens of the mathematically proportioned and interlaced patterns which occurred on the walls of almost every house.

"We must come here again, Emily. This street will give me many a sketch. I observe," he added, turning to Mary, "that it lies along the bed of a valley. Is it not the Tyropæon, which separated Moriah and Zion?"

"This is the Tyropæon, and it runs out at the Damascus gate."

"Ah, I perceive that you are not of the Robinson school of antiquaries. He makes the Tyropæon go westwards toward the Jaffa gate."

"I don't know about that; but if you will walk along this valley, you will find yourself at the Damascus gate before you have reached the end of it."

"We must do that; for the position of Acra depends on the course of the Tyropæon Valley; and if I remember right, Williams, in his new book, argues that it was as you describe."

"Not now, if you please, Mr Russell; we are going this way," said Mary, turning up a street to the right, very narrow and steep.

"If that be the Tyropæon," said Walter, "this must be Acra. How very steep it is!"

Aboo Michael, who as usual preceded us a little, now knocked at a door, which was opened by a tall, gaunt-looking black woman, who, after hearing what our guide said, went away, leaving us to admire the pretty little court in which we were standing. A vine trellis covered the greater part of it, and the foliage gave a most refreshing shade—for it was now past noon, and extremely hot. The vine grew in a little bed of earth,

about three feet deep and four long, which was supported by a kind of stone box, built on purpose for it; and yet the stem of the plant was thicker than my brother's arm, and looked in fine condition.

A latticed door screened the rooms from observation. At the side of the court was the mouth of a well, made of the perforated capital of some ancient column; and close to it a luxuriant elder-tree, covered with white blossom. The owner of the house appeared. He was of middle age, tall, with olive complexion; close curly beard and moustache of black hair, and fine black eyes, but which had rather a languid expression. He was dressed with the most scrupulous care and cleanliness. His robe was of delicate lilac cloth; his vest long, down to the feet, of amber and white silk; full trousers of light green. A rich Cashmere shawl formed his girdle; and his turban of snow-white muslin was folded with the greatest nicety around the crimson tarboosh (or cap, which many people now wear without the shawl or muslin folds which constitute the turban)—the deep blue silk tassel of which just peeped out, to heighten the effect of the other colours.

He made a salaam—bowing, and at the same time raising the right hand to the heart and head—and invited us to enter.

"Now," said Mary, "you will have an opportunity of seeing how conversation is managed here. Of course, nothing must be said about business until coffee has been offered."

We were led into a sort of little antechamber, behind the latticed door. On either side was a room; but a third one opposite stood open.

The host, whom Mary called Ahhmet Effendi, put off his yellow morocco slippers before stepping upon the mat which covered the slightly raised floor, and led us to the divan, which was formed of chintz cushions, and ran round three sides of the room. He seated himself cross-legged in one corner upon a beautiful little carpet, and we sat down in European fashion. When all were seated, he renewed the salaam to each one separately, and inquired after our health—speaking in a deliberate manner, which was very dignified. To his inquiries we replied, "Well, thank you."

"You must not say that," said Mary; "you must not thank man. An Arab always says, 'B'chair Hamd-ul-Illah'—(Well, thank God,) for it is He that preserves health."

We were rather at a loss for subjects of conversation; but Aboo Michael made up for our silence. I was astonished at the servile manner of this man in presence of the Mohammedan gentleman. His attitude was positively cringing, as he sat awkwardly on the edge of the divan, (without shoes, which he also had put off at the door,) not, in the Oriental manner, cross-legged, but nearly as we did—it seemed an imitation of the European way—while our host reclined among his cushions, speaking affably as he dropped bead after bead of the amber rosary in his left hand. Aboo Michael sat bolt upright. His hands, which lay

folded on his knees, were covered as much as possible by the hanging sleeves, (an Oriental mode of showing respect.) He scarcely raised his eyes, and spoke in a low tone of voice, apparently assenting to everything that the effendi uttered. The abject humility of the Christian was a painful contrast to the proud and indolent courtesy with which the Moslem bore himself—the one acknowledging, what the other scarcely took the trouble to assert, that the Moslem had been master, and the Christian slave; since the forefathers of the one had offered Islam, tribute, or the sword, to the ancestors of the other.

A slave brought in lemonade on a tray; over his shoulders was thrown a gold-embroidered napkin.

"Now," said Mary, "watch and do as Aboo Michael and I do, and you will learn the Oriental etiquette of visits."

The master of the house signed to the slave, whose eye was fixed on his, to offer the lemonade to my brother first.

Walter managed the lemonade pretty well; but I saw that Aboo Michael, after putting down his glass, and wiping his lips on the embroidered napkin, made a salaam to the host, which was accepted, and returned as a matter of course.

Presently the slave returned with a tray, on which was a glass vase containing preserved citron, two glasses of pure water, and some small silver spoons.

Walter was at a loss this time. However, he took up the spoonful of preserve which the slave had placed

ready, and then drank one of the glasses of water. I could see a twinkle in the eye of the black man; but though his master observed everything, he betrayed no surprise or amazement.

When it came to Aboo Michael's turn, he first took the spoonful of preserve, put the spoon into the empty glass, and then taking a sip from the water in the other, wiped his lips on the napkin; and then, raising his eyes, salaamed the host, who was watching to receive and return the salutation, and said something, to which Aboo Michael replied. Mary came next, and she did precisely the same, which I imitated.

A few more words of conversation, and then came the coffee. The slave took it from another, who poured it out at the door into little tiny cups of china, which were placed in small holders, like egg-cups, of silver, and presented one to each. These were sipped almost in silence.

The slave stood with folded arms, watching to take each cup the moment it was finished—placing one hand over and one under it, and retiring a step or two backwards. The salaam and some short sentence were again addressed to the host after the coffee, and soon after business began; but not before long pipes were brought in and given to each of the gentlemen. Pipes were offered to us ladies, but we declined them. Mary translated for me, in a low voice, what was said. Aboo Michael began—

"Your honour is thinking of going to Mecca?"

"Inshallah, please God."

"It will be a very long and fatiguing journey."

"True; but, with the help of God, I hope to arrive in safety."

"Inshallah—When does your honour think of departing?"

"I wish to pass Ramadan in Egypt; and from thence I will join the Haj."

"And your honour will not leave your house empty during your absence?"

"Who should dwell in it? My father-in-law, praise be to God, is well; and with him I shall leave my family."

"These friends of the English priest, whose daughter you have seen before, (and here the effendi made a salaam to Mary,) are in need of a house;"—and so they went on slowly from one point to another, until the delicate question of rent was arrived at.

Aboo Michael had heard that 7000 piastres was the sum asked for a two years' lease; and he therefore offered 3000—the sum of 5000 being, we were told, the utmost the house was really worth. And they went on, abating 500 on the one side, and raising it on the other, but in a perfectly calm manner, till 4500 had been offered by Aboo Michael.

The effendi then said, that for the khāter, (*i.e.*, goodwill; *i.e.*, to please,) his old friend, Mr Andersen, we should have it for 5000 piastres.

We asked if we might see the rooms. He clapped his hands, and the slave reappeared. Mary told me he had given orders to his hareem to hide themselves

in the store-room, that we might visit their rooms. He then rose and opened the latticed window, which commanded a fine oblique view of the mosque, surrounded by cypress-trees, with a peep at the Moab mountains, and two or three palm-trees in the foreground. Then we went into the rooms on each side of the little antechamber. One on the left looked into the court, and had a small window, very high up, which admitted air, but gave no view. The hareem appeared to have quitted this room, for in it were sundry mats and cushions, and a primitive-looking child's cradle, made of unpainted wood, and a narghileh, with the coals still live upon the tobacco. A mixture of almonds, walnuts, sugar, and butter, was being made into some sweet dish, and was left on a tray on the floor.

The other room, on the right hand, had a pretty view across the north wall of the city towards the olive grove beyond Damascus gate. All the rooms were clean-looking. At the opposite side of the court was the stone staircase, which led up to a terrace, from whence a glorious prospect across the city towards Mount Zion could be obtained. The domed houses rose one above the other in tiers, until the view was closed by the castle of David and the surrounding fortifications, towering up against the western sky. The room—for there was only one up here—looked towards the east, full upon the Mount of Olives.

"Oh, how I should like to have this room!"

"Yes, Emily, this will just do for you," said Walter. "I like this house extremely; we will take it."

"Stay," said Mary; "let us inquire first about the water. You would not like a house where there is only water enough in the well for three months, and then have to buy for all the rest of the year."

But Aboo Michael said he had already asked, and that there was enough water for the whole year in the cistern. So that was settled.

"One thing more," said Mary; "where is the kitchen?"

"Down-stairs, off the court."

So we went down, and were shown a little room, about five feet by four, paved with stone, without a window, without a chimney, and with a row of little grates for fire, almost on the ground.

The gaunt-looking slave was sitting on the ground, rolling up rice in vine leaves for the sunset meal.

"That is not a bad kitchen," said Mary; "I see it has in it a mouth to the well."

I thought it a very bad kitchen, and wondered how dinner was to be cooked without a chimney.

"Why, you see those fires," said Mary; "there is hardly any smoke from them. Charcoal does not make much smoke; and see, here, outside the door, in this corner, is a chimney under the arch. If you want to make wood fires for anything large, it must be here. And this little place (peeping into a sort of cupboard with a wooden front) will do for a servant to sleep in."

"Not that, surely!"

"Oh dear, yes. The servants here put down their mat

and their bed anywhere, by night, and roll it up by day."

Mary and I were allowed to peep into the store-room where the ladies of the house were hiding. They were laughing and chattering, and seemed highly amused at our having turned them out of their abode.

They pulled aside the handkerchiefs of coloured muslin—yellow and red—with which their faces were covered, on Mary saluting them in Arabic, and gathered round us, like so many children, to examine us and our dress. They asked if we liked the house, if it was pretty, if we were sisters, &c.

The principal wife, as it seemed, was a delicate-looking young creature, of perhaps sixteen—almost a child. Her neck was heavily laden with gold ornaments. She looked as if she never went out for exercise—like a hot-house plant. Her mother—not very old, but very fat and ugly—was also there, and held in her arms a little grandchild, who was pommelling her vigorously to make her let him get down and go to his father. They wanted us to stay. It was evidently fine fun to have us there; but it was now late, and we were obliged to hasten home. The effendi took leave of us very courteously at his door, and said the house should be ready for us in ten days.

On our way back, a Moslem boy threw a stone at us from beneath an arch leading to the Mosque of Omar, though we had cautiously avoided everything like intrusion on our part, and were but standing still, at a distance, to enjoy the peep at the mosque, and its con-

trast of deep shade and narrow space on this side the arch—with bright sunlight, green grass, and ample space beyond it.

CHAPTER XI.

COUNTRY RIDES.

"OUR house is taken, Mrs Andersen: now for the cares of housekeeping. You see I come and ask you for help when I get into difficulties. And here is one at the very outset: how shall I find servants?"

"That is a difficulty, certainly, for servants are not easily found. Some people find the Bethlehem peasant women the best. At any rate they are strong and healthy; but at first they are very rough. I think, if you could find a townswoman like our Um Hanna, it would be best. I will speak to her about it."

"How is it," I asked, "that servants are so difficult to obtain? Surely there must be poor people who would like to earn money."

"Not so many as in England. They can live upon less, and do not care to exert themselves to make it more. Then there are the different classes and sects kept so very distinct. The Jewesses, of course, would not venture out of their own quarter. The Moslems are too proud. The poorer work at home, and the rich keep slaves. They never have hired servants at all. And

the Latins and Greeks would not at first come to our house because we were Protestants. Now some of the Greeks do come; they have gained courage, and found out that we do not use any unfair means of disturbing their religious observances."

"But your woman, Um Hanna, is of middle age. Are there no young girls one could teach?"

"There are girls, of course, but their mothers would for no consideration let them go from home until they are married; and you know that takes place at a very early age. Our Girius has been married about six months, and his bride is not yet thirteen. She is quite a little girl still. Poor widows, who have three or four children to bring up, will enter service in order to support them on their earnings. But they only come by day, and go home by sunset before it is dark."

"Are they honest?"

"Some; but even the most honest will think it no harm to take food for their children, especially if it is cooked; and some would be afraid to steal money or silver who do not mind carrying off articles of clothing. It is necessary to keep everything under lock and key, and when you go out to take the key of your bedroom, for even if your servants are honest, a neighbour may walk over the terrace-wall from the adjoining roof, and carry off anything she fancies. This is most likely to happen if your neighbours are Moslems. They are almost sure to be thieves, and their slaves are worse."

"Now for a man-servant: where is he to be found?"

"That is more difficult still. I don't know of any one."

"Perhaps, mamma," said Mary, "Constantine, the little brother-in-law of Girius, would do. He is an active little fellow, and his mother would be glad if he could earn his bread. We could allow him to come and learn for a few days, by watching and helping Girius."

"I begin to get a little alarmed at the idea of commencing housekeeping with servants who know nothing of service, and who can only speak a language of which I know nothing, or next to nothing."

Mary laughed. "Why, Miss Russell, that is what we have all had to go through; and I assure you it is a capital way of learning Arabic."

"That is some consolation; but you knew Arabic as a child."

"Don't be afraid, you will get on; and when you are in despair I will come and help you."

Walter now joined us. "I have been looking at horses, Emily. We shall require horses, for in this summer heat neither of us can walk enough for fresh air and exercise on the stony roads or no-roads, and certainly not far enough for my drawing purposes. Will you go out this afternoon, and try two that are offered to me?"

"That will be delightful."

"If you keep horses, Mr Russell, as you certainly will be obliged to do, you must have a groom, and he must be an Egyptian."

"Can none but Egyptians groom horses?"

"Not well at least; but none of them *will* groom

horses. It is beneath them, and the Egyptian grooms are first-rate. In their own country they run before their master's horses, and can keep up with them even at a gallop."

When our horses were led up, and we were about to mount, a lad of stupid expression, like an overgrown boy, dressed in blue cotton drawers and jacket, was standing beside them. His features and copper complexion were at once recognised by Walter. "That fellow is an Egyptian. I wonder if he is a groom come to engage himself to us." He ran forward to kiss my brother's hand, but we could not speak to him. Here was the beginning of trouble in speaking to servants. However, Mary, who was going to ride with us, came to the rescue; and her father's groom said he was a friend of his. Walter took him for a month on trial; but we declined trying his running powers, and left him at home.

Our ride was down the Valley of Hinnom to Siloam. The Pool of Siloam, where the fountain issues from beneath the mountain, is a little off the road. We had walked there one Sunday afternoon. The waters of Siloam are conducted by channels hewn in the rock, and by others built in masonry or hollowed in the earth, to a multitude of vegetable gardens, which fill not only the old pool, but all this part of the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and follow its course down to the Well of En-rogel.

These must be the representatives of the king's gardens in the king's dale, and very pretty they looked,

brilliantly green and fresh. All the women and children seemed to have forsaken the village of Siloam, (perched opposite on the craggy foot of Olivet,) and to be at work in their gardens. The hum of voices—laughing of the girls, scolding of the boys, and a ceaseless chattering of the blue-gowned women—mingled with the lowing of cattle and braying of donkeys, and people were talking to each other from opposite sides of the valley. The whole scene was cheerful and animated. We picked our way across the large stones which formed the water channel. A flock of goats and gambolling kids blocked up the narrow path; and while we waited for them to pass, Walter took a rapid sketch of a group of women who sat by the watercourse washing in a primitive manner. Each garment was laid upon a stone, rubbed with a little soap, water poured over it from the hand or a little pottery jar, and then beaten with a smooth stone. The immense muscular arms and activity of these women were very remarkable, and a great contrast to those in the town. Each wore a simple linen gown, (dyed indigo blue,) partly tucked up as she sat with her bare feet in the water. A dusky cloth, (which had perhaps once been white,) with coloured fringes, served as veil, and hung down the back. The face was tatooed with blue spots on the cheeks, forehead, and lips; and a pattern in the same was elaborately marked on the wrist. The upper part of the face was encircled with a half-moon of coins, laid scale-fashion one over the other, and on the wrists were silver bracelets. The children were play-

ing half-naked by their mother's side. Sturdy little urchins they were too, and they were not too young to toddle forward and hold up their little hand for backsheesh. The women looked up and laughed when Mary held out her hand, and said, "Give me backsheesh. I have come to see you—now give me backsheesh."

"She knows Arabic," said one. "Who is she?"

"Do I know?" said another. "They 're all Ingleezee."

"That 's the husband, and those are the wives," said a third.

"Poor things! see how they ride," said another; "they have only one leg."

"Wonderful!" And just at this moment a ragged girl, but wearing silver coins like the rest, came up bestriding a rough little donkey. "Why don't they ride like me?" she cried.

"Because, poor things, they have only one leg. Come round here and look." And one or two of them began to feel us, to ascertain this fact.

Dispensing with any further inspection of so close a kind from the good-natured dirty creatures, we rode on. Mary, wishing them good evening, was answered in chorus, "May God give you a good evening! Go in peace," (Ma'-es-salâmeh.)

Mary explained that this meant literally, "with peace." She then taught me the form of leave-taking after a visit. The person going away says, "Khaterak," (by your leave or pleasure.) The host replies, "Ma'-es-salâmeh," (with peace;) to which the

departing guest replies, "Alla yasellemak," (may God give you peace.) It appears that every compliment has its special reply, which is as beautiful as appropriate.

Riding on, we crossed the valley at the foot of Moriah by a little stone bridge. The mountain is very precipitous, and the effect of the fine old battlemented walls of the temple enclosure is grand as one looks up from beneath.

What a wonderful sight it must have been, when the wild valley and the mountains around were lighted up by the glare of the awful fire that destroyed the temple! Now all was as peaceful as if the cry of agony and the din of war had never been echoed by these rocks; and some wild doves flew past to their nests among the tombs of Zechariah and St James. These old massive tombs and the pillar of Absalom are in fine keeping with the scene, standing as they do where the valley narrows into a mere pass, as sentinels over the countless Jewish graves which are spread over the southern slopes of Olivet.

There is a little heap of stones at the foot of Absalom's pillar. Every boy casts seven stones at it as he passes by.

On the mountain just above, and partly concealed by the top of the pillar, I caught sight of a person sitting on the ground beside a grave. His back was towards us, but he was not to be easily mistaken. It was poor Rabbi Abraham beside the grave of his wife. Our road lay below, along the valley, and he did not seem to hear us. We passed on, and then Mary said, "Poor fellow!

he is bidding her farewell, for to-morrow he is obliged to go to Beyrout in pursuit of his boys."

"What has become of them?"

"The Jews, in order to prevent their turning Christians like their father and sister, have sent them to Beyrout, and it is supposed that they will be shipped off for Europe, unless their father can get there in time. A friend told him only to-day that they were gone. They left yesterday, and he is afraid that he may be too late, and that he will never see his children more. And certainly, if they are sent on to Russia, there is not much chance of his finding them again."

"Why did he let them go?"

"He could not prevent it, or rather, he knew nothing of it. Their Jewish friends have refused to give them up, and the Pasha, to whom he has repeatedly applied, says he has no means of making them do so. He is now going to try and get help from his consul—the Russian consul-general in Beyrout—unless it is too late when he gets there."

"And Rachel?"

"She will stay with us. The whole family is broken up, and they seem to have been a very attached one. It is a melancholy sight. Poor Abraham has not become a Christian for this world's pleasures, for he has not only lost wife and children, but every penny he possessed of property, and he has no means of recovering it."

"Was he well off?"

"Very much so. He had a good deal of plate, and

some jewels which he had brought with him from Russia when he first came here; but he also had a salary from the synagogue, to which he was attached; and in Russia he was very wealthy, and left property among his relations there, from which he received a regular income, but it was remitted through the rabbis here. If his relations hear of his becoming a Christian, they will mourn for him as dead, and of course send him no more remittances; but even if they should send, the rabbis here will consider him dead, and distribute the money to others."

"What will he do then?"

"I don't know. He is very learned as a Jewish rabbi; but at present he is not fit for any European employment, and there is no one to employ him. But he refuses to accept a penny from papa, for he says he will not have his old friends think he became a Christian for gain. It was with great difficulty that Mr Levi (who, you know, is also of Jewish origin) got him to stay a while as his guest in his house.

"And how is he going to get to Beyrout?" asked Walter.

"He had two rings on his fingers the day he left the synagogue. One of these he has sold, and he thinks the money will be enough to take him there and back. The other was his wife's gift, and he will not part with it if he can help it."

By this time we had reached the top of the Scopus mountain, north-east and north of the Mount of Olives. Oh, what a view of the city burst upon us! We could

not help exclaiming, "Beautiful for situation upon the sides of the north." Half-way between Scopus and Olivet, the range and grandeur of the scenery was astonishing. The city itself is superbly placed—like a queen upon the mountains, the deep valleys and mountains around to guard her. The domes and towers and minarets, and above all the temple platform crowned by that unrivalled dome.

Jerusalem is best seen from hence. The whole city appears in view, and it is unique—unlike any other city in the world—truly royal. How must Titus have felt, when he gazed from this very spot! The prize was worth the deadly struggle which he well knew could alone wrench it from Jewish hands; and his legions were trusty, tried in many a fight—their eagles had never yet been balked of their prey.

Shall we yet again see eagles gathering upon these heights? Is yon city once more to be the prize for which conquerors of the world shall wrestle and shake the earth in the fierceness of their encounter? It were still a worthy prize—and the eagles are hovering afar.

From the Scopus the view in every direction is wonderfully fine. Westward from Mizpeh, and south towards Hebron, the eye sweeps over an endless succession of richly-coloured mountains—the hill country of Judah—which gradually subsides eastwards into the bare desolate heights around En-gedi and the Dead Sea. From among these the Frank Mountain rears its solitary crest. Beyond, the ever-fascinating Moab mountains stretch into the blue distance, and melt and

are lost among the strongholds of Seir. Nearer still the Dead Sea rolls its waters, bright and lovely at this distance.

The wind was blowing fresh, and the air was so clear that one could most perfectly distinguish the northern outline of shore, and trace the course of the River Jordan, by its fringe of dark green trees, along the broad plains of Jericho, and mark the cleft in the mountains made by the Valley of Jabbok, where Israel wrestled with the angel.

"O Emily," exclaimed my brother after a long silence, "there is enough in this country to occupy a painter's whole lifetime! And we have seen scarcely anything. Who has ever painted a picture like this?" The sun cut short our ecstacies, for it began to dip, and we cast one glance more over the city. The red flag of Turkey—crescent and star—was flying over the castle, it being Friday, or the Mohammedan Sabbath.

And now we gave our horses the rein—they snuffed up the fresh breeze, and scampered over the hills. Mine was a bay—young, full of fire, but very gentle. His brilliant eyes would flash, and his nostrils dilate, as he tossed up his head and flew over the ground. Walter's was a light chesnut—the prettiest, roundest, most frolicsome creature I ever beheld. He curled himself up like a kitten, and, excepting when at full speed, would arch and bend his neck in every direction but the one he was going. But they were both very mild and good-tempered. Mary rode a pony, light and active. Ours were natives of the south of Pales-

tine, and of Arab descent; hers was from the north, and had been brought from Mesopotamia by an Armenian pilgrim. He was very hardy and sure-footed. We passed by an encampment of troops. Drum and fifes were playing, and the green and white tents in orderly lines looked very pretty. They were prepared to march upon Hebron, whose sheikh was a rebellious and refractory subject of the Sultan. The next day our ride was to the Valley of Roses, which lies to the south-west from the Bethlehem road, and at the mouth of the deep pass going down by an old Roman road to Gaza. Excepting here and there a patch of barley, the fields in the valley are all planted with rose-bushes, and on the lower terraces of the mountains the rose-trees flourish among the rocks. The cultivation is clean and orderly, and the rose-bushes were covered with half-opened buds; but there were very few blown roses, for the women gather them every morning at sunrise, and carry them to market in Jerusalem, where they are sold in large quantities to the convents for distillation of rose-water for the churches. Most of the flowers were pink, of a delicate tinge, and very fragrant; but here and there was a fine blush-rose, and some were perfectly white.

"Now," said Walter, "I should like to speak a lecture here in this spot to the blasphemers of this holy land, and show how great is the fertility wherever the industry of the people clears away the stones; just here, in this garden of roses, surrounded by pomegranates, fig, vine, barley, walnut, and a large pear-

tree, which is perhaps the progeny of some planting by the old Romans; these luxuriant valleys and terraced round hills before us, dashed with a certain degree of wildness; and then the repose of warm weather, delightful and not oppressive;—and I would tell them to admire the intelligence which designed those hills for the peculiar cultivation of the vine—so horizontal in strata as to suggest to man the use of terraces, and so round in form as to present no corners for creating shadows."

"Then, brother, I should like to continue your lecture, and draw attention to the manner in which this country seems adapted for a dense population. Every one of these round hills looks as if it were intended for a village, like those two which crown the hills yonder. Not only are they strongholds perched up there; but two or three villages may be within speaking distance, without crowding or inconveniencing each other in the least, and have plenty of fresh air to breathe."

"Yes, and then see how the space proper for cultivation is economised by having the houses up there. It leaves the sides and valley below free for planting."

"I observe another thing—that the corn is entirely grown in the valleys and plains, while the vine, olive, and fig are placed on the hill-sides. That reminds me of the expressions in the Bible, 'The valleys are covered over with corn.' 'The mountains shall drop down new wine.' 'The mountains shall drop sweet wine.'"

Returning towards Jerusalem, we passed a noble

evergreen oak, where the valley expanded into a cheerful plain. It was the first I had seen in Palestine: the leaves are small and glossy, something like holly; but the foliage is dense, and the branches wide-spreading. One cannot wonder that a tree which yields such a perfect shade should be valued in this sunny land, nor that the groves should have been held sacred by the ancient heathen, as well as their altars and high places.

Presently after, cantering along the hill-side, which here is waste and uncultivated, I spied growing beside a stone, an everlasting flower, new to me, of a rich crimson. The leaf is white and downy, like that of the yellow everlasting, but the flower is far more beautiful in colour. Then, among a heap of stones, we came upon the tall spikes of a salvia with large violet flowers; and near it grew another salvia with crimson flowers, but smaller.

Our road lay past the Convent of the Cross; and as we drew near, I saw our old friend Papas Athanasius, staff in hand, taking his evening walk.—He greeted us with great warmth; but here again language failed. He spoke Arabic, but we could not. Presently he tried Greek, and Walter managed to exchange a few words; but the English manner of pronouncing the vowels and of accenting were very different from the old gentleman's soft Romaic. He gave me a bunch of white star of Bethlehem and scarlet ranunculus, which he had gathered from the hill-side.

Entering the Jaffa Gate, we passed a file of laden

camels, and saw that the boxes and bales which they bore were directed, some in Hebrew and some in Arabic.

CHAPTER XII.

ARAB SERVANTS—DIFFICULTIES OF LANGUAGE.

THE great work of removal to our new house now occupied our thoughts. The first thing was to get it well scrubbed and cleansed. I began, to the great astonishment of the native servants, by pulling down all the old wood-work, cupboards and shelves. It is most common, in Oriental houses, for a wooden shelf to be carried round a room, at a height of about eight feet from the floor. This is used as a general receptacle for pipes, coffee-cups, &c.; and old china bowls are not uncommon, some of them very handsome. In one house that we visited there was a long range of these bowls; but, behold, they had all been broken in half to increase the show, and placed with the whole side outwards. The native carpenter—a young Latin Christian, barefooted, and in clumsy, full trousers—thought I must be mad to take away what he considered so ornamental as the deal closets, that filled up a variety of little arched recesses in every wall of every room, the more as the wood had been actually painted—a great novelty in Jerusalem—in rough patches of green and

blue oil colour. These little recesses are very convenient: they are made by leaving out a few stones in the thickness of the massive walls, according as the fancy takes the builder. They are of all sizes, up and down, and everywhere; sometimes large enough to form a little alcove in which a sofa may be placed, and then their effect is very pretty.

The principal reason for getting rid of the woodwork was to get rid, at the same time, of the population of insects which it invariably harbours, if old.

By dint of signs and standing by, this great work was accomplished. Next came the removal of most of the wooden lattices, which, Oriental enough in character, were not to our taste, for they shut out the lovely views without keeping out the wind. For summer, lattices might be all very well; and natives content themselves in winter by shutting the wooden shutters, thus excluding cold at the expense of light and air.

But since Europeans had begun to settle here, glass had been imported, and I tried to order my carpenter to make window frames, and put glass into them. But no signs could make him understand, and at last I was obliged to send him with a pencil note to Mary Andersen, begging her to tell him what to do. Meanwhile my woman-servant was making the most extraordinary performances, by way of scrubbing. She was as unlike a servant in outward appearance as anything I had ever seen in my life. Short, fat, barefooted; dressed in immense cotton trousers, and a cloth jacket with gold thread on the seams; a coloured handkerchief round

her head and face, from under which dangled down her back a multitude of little plaits of hair, made to look still more numerous by plaits of silk intermixed. Small gold spangles and a few coins were strung upon the hair, which it was evidently impossible to comb or brush often, by reason of the labour and time required.

Little dumpy hands, which bore no marks of real work, were ornamented by silver rings, set with bits of coloured glass. She had a stupid expression of face, and a fearful squint.

For one room which had to be washed, she drew from the well a large jar of water, and going to the upper end, dashed its contents all at once upon the floor. She laughed like a child at the wetting I got, for I was not prepared for this feat. She herself was mounted on wooden clogs, and with a small broom pursued the flood, sweeping it towards the door, where was a hole which I had not before observed. I then saw that the floor, which was not level, but, on the contrary, sloped considerably towards the door, had been made thus on purpose, and soon found out that the floors of all the rooms are, for the same reason, on an inclined plane. Here was ingenuity!

The next freak of my handmaid was to set open all the doors of a tier of cupboards, in one of the rooms, which, being of new wood, had not been removed like the rest. While I stood by, helpless to inquire or remonstrate, she pushed up before her, from shelf to shelf, a huge jar of water; climbing up after it, soap in hand, till she had reached the roof, where she sat down,

rubbed a little soap on the planks, and emptied the contents of her jar in one great waterfall, which, according to her clever intention, rushed between the planks, over each succeeding shelf, until all had their share of the ablution. Beginning at the top, all had been washed, at least she thought so, and descended, leaving the drying process to nature, while she swept the water out as before. I went down to the kitchen, and found our boy Constantine—a bright-eyed, rosy little fellow, cleanly dressed in white cotton—had returned from market with his basket of meat and vegetables, and was busily at work blowing the fire, not with a pair of bellows, but with a rude fan, made of the long feathers of a goose's wing. It were too long to tell how, by dint of signs to the water and to the fire, to the saucepan and to the meat, I gave orders for a leg of mutton to be boiled; or how, despairing of making myself understood in the matter of vegetables, I watched Constantine carry out his own counsels in reference to the vegetable marrows which he had brought.

With a metal scoop made on purpose, he took out the inside of each one, and filled it instead with rice and chopped meat; and a very palatable dish it was when stewed and served up.

Returning to my woman, I found her sitting on the floor of a room which had just been whitewashed, (by a miserably poor Polish Jew,) scraping off the splashes and spots, which had hardened, with one of my best dessert knives, and using one of my own garments as duster.

I gave her a lesson in the homely art of scrubbing, taking the brush in hand and working hard, while she sat by and laughed. No showing or pushing could make her go down on her knees to scrub. She only shook her head, and squatted upon her heels, or else, standing up, stooped forward in a manner that would soon have broken her back, and gave her no power to use her arms and hands. It was evident the Jerusalem women were not used to scrubbing. And so it is. There was not a wooden floor in all the country, and sweeping water with a broom over the stone pavement is their approved manner of cleansing it.

The carpenter brought back the note. He had been made to understand that we wanted windows; "but," wrote Mary, "how will you have the glass put in?—with nails, or let into the frame? for putty is not to be got in Jerusalem. If you wish nails, 'mismâr' is the word in Arabic; if not, say 'bella mismâr,' (without nails,) and he will understand you."

I took a fancy to seeing both, for I could not imagine how glass was either to be put in with nails, or let into the frame. The word for half I knew, (nus'f;) so improved upon my teacher's directions by saying, "half with nails and half without nails;" at which the carpenter looked astonished, but put his hand on his head, saying, "ala rasee," (on my head be it,) and went away, having been also made to understand by Walter that we wanted a new deal table, a little larger than one we showed him. It is surprising how quickly the Arabs understand one's signs, and the broken words of their

language; and we had several lessons in the course of this day from our servants, who would point to a thing and repeat its name until we knew it. They were highly amused at becoming teachers.

This had been a very long absence from my maid: what might not she have been doing? I found her again squatted on her heels, scraping the floor with a new dinner knife, which she had managed to spoil completely. The blade was notched and bent, and the handle cracked. I was very angry, and the words, "You good-for-nothing thing, I told you not—" burst from my lips; but here I stopped. She could not understand English, and I could have laughed in spite of vexation.

She had risen and folded her hands, with a most comical expression on her face—half demure and half don't care. And when I spoke again, repeating my small stock of Arabic words of reproof, "Bad, very bad; why?" (did you do so—understood,) she, looking at me without moving a muscle of her face, gravely drew her straight eye round into the opposite direction from the squinting one, so that there she was actually squinting in the most awful manner with both eyes at once. I was vanquished, and ran out of the room, but came back with an argument she could perfectly understand, in the shape of a few piastres, which I gave her, and, with a gentle push or two towards the door, intimated she might go. In the most leisurely manner she unfolded the large cotton sheet, which is the approved out-of-door envelope for women of all ranks in the

Holy City, and which requires some skill in putting on. A muslin handkerchief—thin, but closely printed in dark colours, so as to entirely conceal the face—is first hung over the forehead, and then the sheet is put on so that the middle of one side rests on the top of the head. The two upper corners are then folded across and carefully tucked into the girdle, and thus a pair of hanging sleeves is improvised. The whole affair lies close and tight, so that the fair one within looks more like an odd-shaped bale than anything else; and this resemblance is strengthened by the waddling gait which is universal, and which arises from their always wearing heelless slippers, so that the feet must be shuffled along on the ground. Walking is impossible; and yet in the house they go about cleverly enough on their high wooden pattens.

I have seen some of these nearly a foot high, and very prettily inlaid with mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell.

When little Constantine found that the woman had been despatched, he went off, without saying a word, and fetched his mother—a tall graceful creature, even in her white sheet, as she stood before me with it partially thrown off. Her full, soft, gazelle-like eyes, added to the half melancholy and very gentle expression of her face. She made me a respectful salaam, but in an easy dignified manner, which was a complete contrast to the clumsy ignorant ways of the other. She had been, as I afterwards found, a widow for several years. For the sake of her husband's memory she had refused

many offers of marriage, and remained a widow. Her daughter of thirteen was the wife of my old acquaintance Girius; and yet she herself was only about seven and twenty.

I saw at once whence her boy Constantine had his fine black eyes; but they were much more vivacious than those of his mother.

She had been employed in an English family, and learned many useful things from the English maid; and she set to work with a very respectable energy—that is, for a person brought up in the slow Oriental way. By the time sunset arrived we had done wonders; and next morning she returned with another woman called Helaneh—tidy looking, with a row of gold coins across her forehead, but a sadly sleepy drawl. This one, she gave me to understand, would stay and be my servant. Her movements were as sleepy as her speech, and about every hour she would leave her work and sit down in the court at the kitchen door, smoking a pipe, and make signs to me of fatigue. However, by degrees the house was got into order.

Mary came to spend the day with me and help me as dragoman.

Our luggage, and some furniture, (which we had been fortunate enough to purchase at a sale from a family returning to Europe,) were carried from the other end of the town on the backs of great burly porters—Egyptians, we were told, (whom it was necessary to watch lest they should put a big box on the top of a basket of china, &c., &c.;) and how they had conveyed them-

selves and their loads along the narrow streets and past the camels, was a mystery to me.

In due time our carpenter brought home the windows and their frames—rudely made of unpainted deal wood. As I had said that half the panes were to be put in with nails, and half let into the frames, he had brought half of each double window (the only form of windows known in Jerusalem) with glass, and for the other half he carried a number of panes in his hand, together with nails and hammer. This was being attentive to orders in an unexpected fashion, but there was no remedy.

In putting up the frames there was considerable difficulty; for, as no Arab building is straight, either perpendicularly or horizontally, bits had to be sawn off the wood in some places, and small stones put in to fill up the irregularities in others; and finally, so many holes were left between the window frame and the stone-work that there was no danger of the room being too close for want of fresh air. The panes put in with nails were rested against the outer edge of the frame, while small nails were driven in all round on the inside, to keep them from falling, or being blown into the room. Each window was hung, by means of small hooks, into tin sockets, and these were the hinges. In hanging one of them a pane got broken. In order to replace this, it was necessary to take down the window again, for the pane was one of those let into the frame. A strange-looking old man came to put in the pane. He was a Jew from Salonica, who had lived in Con-

stantinople, and there learned to glaze windows. He was tall, gaunt, but with fine features, had it not been for the half-starved look in his face. Putting off his shoes at the door, he came over and sat down on the ground, taking the window on his lap. I then saw that little wooden pins or rivets held the frame together at the four corners. These he removed with one blow of his hammer, opened the frame, placed the pane of glass in a groove made on purpose, closed the frame and replaced the rivets, and our window was hung up again in its place. Rude wooden buttons served to keep it shut.

The table was also brought home by the carpenter; but its sides were not parallel, and one leg was longer than the others, so that it would not stand. We pointed this out to the man, and left him to set it to rights. On coming back I found him busily at work chipping a hole in the stone floor to receive the leg that was too long! The idea had never entered his head to saw off a bit of the wood, but he highly approved, when this was suggested to him.

And yet it would be very wrong to call the Arabs stupid. They seem unable to go out of a beaten track, or to find out new things for themselves; but once show them a thing, and they do not forget it. They execute most beautifully various kinds of handiwork to which they are accustomed. We were one day passing a tailor's stall—for the shops in Jerusalem do not deserve a better name;—the man was sitting cross-legged, embroidering with fine gold thread a jacket of

green velvet. It seemed to be a lady's jacket. The design was most massive and elaborate; one side and one sleeve were finished, and he was at work upon the other, but without any pattern before him, and in fact he appeared to be designing as he went on.

The ornamentation thus worked, either in braid or gold, upon the jackets, and gaiters, and waistcoats, which one sees worn every day in the bazaars of Jerusalem, is very beautiful. Not to speak of the inlaying in coloured marbles and exquisite sculpturing still to be found in the relics of the ancient Saracenic houses, and the beautiful inscriptions which cover the large copper kettles used in Arab kitchens. Their modern seal engraving is very elegant; and although I have not seen any modern illuminated manuscripts, the ornamental Arabic writing of the present day is in the same style.

I knew an Arab who had the art of producing raised inscriptions on writing paper with his thumb nail. He wrote my name in that manner with all the flowing lines and floral embellishments peculiar to the Arabesque style. The effect was as if the inscription had been stamped upon the paper.

During this day I had not been much at a loss for Arabic, because Mary was with me, and helped me, both by speaking for me, and by teaching me a number of common words. The sentence which became most useful to me was, "What is the name of that?" ("Sh'oo ism hada?" or, "aish ism-ho?") By means of this sentence, and pointing to the thing in question,

I soon got from the servants a large number of words, and I always kept a little note-book and pencil in my pocket into which I wrote every English word which I wanted to use in Arabic. Then, when Mary and I next met, she used to tell me these words, which I afterwards transferred into a paper book, alphabetically paged according to the English words; and so in time I got a little dictionary of my own, taking pains to acquire the Arabic character and spelling of each word.

Verbs were more puzzling than nouns. They were not so easily inquired for by means of my sentence—"What's the name of that?" But, by close attention to what the servants said, I learnt the commonest verbs, which were often repeated. My brother and I read a little together every day. We had Stewart's Grammar, and found the greatest benefit from writing out the conjugations of the verbs.

It is true that the Arabic commonly spoken is different from that found in books. That is to say, only the simpler forms are used; but one cannot properly understand these, unless one is acquainted with the rules by which they are arranged, and the complete forms of which they are a part. We both soon discovered that a living language, spoken every day, and all day long, by the people among whom one lives, does not present very formidable difficulties, as far as conversation is concerned, even though it should possess, as some one told us, nine hundred different words

meaning lion, and dozens of names for many common objects.

True, one rarely passes a day without hearing some fresh name for a thing which one fondly hopes has no more names than the six or seven already learnt. But, after all, this is much the same in English; *e.g.*—

Box, chest, case, casket.

Wind, breeze, gale, storm, hurricane.

Cold, cool, chilly, fresh.

Pull, tug, draw, drag.

Beat, thump, hit, strike, box, slap, knock, cuff, pummel, drub, flog, thrash, whack.

And then there is usually one common name which may be generally used. "Jarrah" is the usual word for jar; although certainly an Arab would always have separate and distinct names for the following varieties:—one with a spout, "ibreek;" one with two handles at the sides, and small in size, used for milk, "mahhlabeh," (literally, milk vessel;) one a little larger, of the same kind, "tos," or "kurse," (cruse;) a large-sized one, capable of containing three or four gallons, is the *jar* proper, used for water, wine, and oil. The very largest kind is called "zeer;" another kind, large, round, and with a neck, but not used in Jerusalem, is called "mijwiz."

By the by, in the above paragraph, I have used several English words which are either Arabic derivatives, or belonging to a common family—cuff, (in Arabic, "keff,") drub, (Arabic, "darab,") jar, ("jarrah,")

cruse, ("kurse;") and there are very many more—tall, ("taweel," *i.e.*, long,) to shred, ("sharat,") cut, ("kata,") corner, ("kurneh,") &c., &c.*

* Nevertheless, it is true that to *learn Arabic* is a work of many years, and requires close application. Its riches are inexhaustible, and the niceties of grammar require close attention and long practice before they are mastered; so that we may speak, and read, and even write Arabic, and yet be very very far from knowing it. "The Arabic tongue is a very wide one," say the Arabs, and they glory in it. It is on this account that the dialects vary in different provinces, and even among different classes in the same town. Even the manner of pronouncing will differ between two villages,—Silwan, for instance, and Bethlehem. In the former, they pronounce the *c* hard; in the latter, they turn it into *ch*, (as in church.)

Certain words are current in the town, which are scarcely known, or at least only to the learned, in another. A townswoman will say "ba'ad" for after, and a peasant "'okob." In one town wind is called "reehh," and in another "hawa;" and yet both are good Arabic, and easily understood. In books the various words would all occur. The poorest dialect is that spoken by the women in the cities. They not only have a limited range of words, but they clip the words themselves, and leave out all the *h's*, so that with them "kaif kaifak" becomes "'aif 'aifa." It is as if we were to talk of "ta'ing a wa' to buy some 'a'e," (taking a walk to buy some cake.) They also turn *j* into *z*, and *sh* into *s*; thus, I shall not judge him, would be, "I sall not zudze him." They consider this elegant and refined, but it is very annoying to the ear of one who can read, and knows how words are spelt, and not a little increases the difficulties of the learner. Their own husbands look with contempt upon the women's dialect, but "it is only a woman; what matter? she speaks like a woman." This poverty of pronunciation is, however, also indulged in by the rising generation. Young men, who find that French and Italian Europeans cannot pronounce the gutturals, imitate them in an affected feminine way of talking, and omit or clip these letters. So do those who make a pretence of speaking in the Turkish style, for in that language the gutturals are all softened.

As a general rule, Christian Arabic is poorer than Moslem Arabic.

The pantomime of signs and gestures, which are so extraordinary to a European, are found to be regular and orderly in application; and in a very short time one catches one's self adopting and using them. They assist a foreigner in comprehending what is said.

But I have anticipated, and wandered far away from my domestic difficulties in those days in which Arab gutturals were as yet unpronounceable by my organs, and when I could not even hear the difference between some of the letters, and ran a risk of asking how a person's uncle was, when I only wished to say, "How do you do?" or of desiring an uncle to be put over the pickles, instead of vinegar.

One day I had, as I thought, finished my morning's household work, and was busily engaged in a sketch from my window, when my Arab woman came up,

There is less of the genius of Antar and of the desert in it, and the style of the Koran is, from religious prejudice, carefully avoided.

The scribes speak a better dialect; the shopkeepers better still. The effendies' language is rich and copious, and often extremely polished and interspersed with poetical allusions or quotations. Less cultivated, but more powerful and nervous, is the dialect of the peasantry. This approaches more nearly, especially in the south of Palestine, to the grand language of the Desert—the poetic and racy idiom of the "Arab el Arab," the Bedouin, who still encourage the bard among their tribes, and will reward an impromptu poem on the heroic deeds of some swarthy champion of desert honour by a priceless mare, and the admiration of all who live in tents between the Euphrates and the Nile. His ardent verses will be caught up by the young men, and sung at night to the chieftains in their camp, or chanted while crossing the boundless sands on the fleet dromedary. Sometimes, but more rarely, they are committed to writing.

asking for something. I could not understand her. She shortened her sentence, and at last only repeated one word over and over again—"fahh'm, fahh'm." What was fahh'm? I could not guess. She made signs; but it was of no use. "Fahh'm" conveyed no idea to my mind. She was perplexed; then laughed, and went away, and came back presently with a bit of black something between her fingers. Putting off her shoes at the door, she came near, and showed me a bit of charcoal, all wet and clean, washed on purpose to show me. *This* was "fahh'm." I never again forgot the name of charcoal in Arabic.

CHAPTER XIII.

TO BETHLEHEM, FOR SCENE OF MY BROTHER'S PICTURE.

We were now settled in our house, and beginning to understand the ways of managing. I had the delightful room at the top for my own. Walter took as his bedroom the one with a little window high up in the wall. Though there was no view, it was airy and pleasant. Our sitting-room was the one looking towards the mosque and the Moab mountains, and we dined in the one which looked north upon the city wall and the olive grove beyond.

Here my brother established his drawing and painting apparatus, as he intended setting seriously to work.

Various materials were wanting, and for these we wrote to England, and also for some necessary articles of furniture.

In three months from sending the letter we hoped to receive the things; and, meanwhile, there was much to be done besides working at Arabic regularly, which Walter was determined to learn, in order to become better acquainted with manners and customs.

Then all the sketches had to be prepared, and the originals chosen for the persons. We had not yet been to Bethlehem, but had seen it at a distance from the convent of Mar Elias, (or St Elijah,) about three miles south of Jerusalem. From hence the town of Bethlehem, crowning its vine-clad heights, is seen to great advantage among the Judean mountains.

"Why," exclaimed Walter, "it is the border city on this side towards Moab. Look how rapidly the ground falls to the east of Bethlehem. There is not an important position between it and the Moab range. No wonder that Naomi's family went across there when obliged to leave their own town, and that David sent his family to the king of Moab when Saul pressed him too closely."

Mr Andersen, who was riding with us, pointed out Kerek, the principal city of Moab, just opposite Bethlehem, in a cleft at the top of the line of Moab mountains. The line of walls was visible, and it seemed still to be a strong place—not unworthy to be the representative of the ancient Kir-Moab; and he told us that "to this day the Bethlehemites carry on a good

deal of traffic with Kerek. They go round by the south end of the Dead Sea. The population of Kerek is chiefly Christian, of the Greek rite; but they are deplorably ignorant, and I have been credibly informed that the priest baptizes children in the name 'of the Trinity *and* of the Holy Virgin,' and repeats the Lord's Prayer, together with the Fathhah, or opening chapter of the Koran; and judging by the ignorance of the Greek parish priests in this part of the country, I can believe it."

"Are they natives of Greece?"

"No. The khoory, (or curate,) as he is called, is generally an Arab. They are of humble rank, and uneducated for the most part. But they are quiet and well-behaved, and being married, usually have a family to maintain."

"Then," said Walter, "they must be very different from the Greek priests one sees in Jerusalem, who have an air of wealth and substance about them."

"Of course; those belong to the convents. They are monks. Very few of them can speak any Arabic, they are native Greeks; and they live in comfort, if not positive luxury, for the convents are very wealthy."

"Your old friend, Mr Andersen, does not seem to live a luxurious life—I mean Papas Athanasius."

"No; on the contrary, his habits are very simple. He is a learned man, and fond of study. He has the rank of Archimandrite, and would probably have been Patriarch by this time, had not the rest rather dreaded that he might prove a reformer among them in more

senses than one. But we shall be late for the gates if we linger here any more, and you must not turn your horse's head without looking for a moment at yonder little domed building by the road-side. Rachel's sepulchre, in the way to Ephratah, which is Bethlehem."

"What is that singular volcanic-looking mountain, all by itself, eastward from Bethlehem?"

"The Frank Mountain, so called because the Crusaders fortified and held it; but it is more interesting as the Herodion, or burial-place of Herod the Great—there in full view of Bethlehem. Josephus's description of the mountain, which Herod raised artificially still higher than it was by nature, and on which he built a palatial fortress, answers well to the Frank Mountain. Possibly its Arabic name of Fureidis, or Little Paradise, is in remembrance of its beautiful gardens. When the cruel tyrant died at Jericho, they brought him up and buried him on the top of this mountain."

"Strange that he should lie there in sight of the place where his greatest iniquity was committed!"

"Yes, strange indeed; and it is also curious, that almost within sight of each other there should be two mountain peaks occupied by the tombs of two such very different men as Aaron and Herod. Mount Hor is down there, to the south-east."

"Do show us Pisgah, Mr Andersen."

"I cannot. The only eminence in the Moab range, which we can see from this side of the Jordan, is that slight pinnacle opposite. Perhaps that is Pisgah. Doubtless, the view from it is very extensive over this

side of the land. But we shall be very late; see Bethlehem is already in shade."

"One more question. What is this beautifully situated village among the olive-trees on our right, with the little domed building?"

"Bait Jala. Supposed to be the Zelah or Zelzah of the Bible.* J and Z are often interchanged in modern Arabic. It is a rule that the villages whose names begin with Bait (house) or Ain (spring) are representatives of ancient Hebrew places. The domed building is the village church. They are Greeks."

"The situation on the hill-side is lovely, and how dense the wood of olive-trees around it!"

"It is a specimen of how richly clad with trees this country might be. That mountain is not one whit more fertile or easily cultivated than all the others around."

"But the others look so stony."

"So would this if the trees were taken away. They grow among the rocks, and thrive all the better; for thus their roots are sheltered from the sun, and kept moist and cool."

The sight of this village gave us a very new idea of what Palestine might become, if once more the hills were planted.

"But then," added Mr Andersen, "there is no population to undertake such a work. The Arabs are dwindling away. Look round and see how few villages there are; and the men of even these do not cultivate a tithe of their lands."

* Josh. xviii. 28; 1 Sam. x. 2.

On our way back to Jerusalem we met a large body of Turkish soldiers on the march to Hebron. They were walking, some fast, some slow, some running and hopping, to keep up with the rest, their trousers tucked up, and knapsacks on their backs; and a most unsoldierly-looking rabble,—many of them below the middle size.

The people of Hebron had revolted from their Sheikh Abderrahman, (slave of the merciful,) and these contemptible-looking troops were going to subdue them.

. . . . . .

Although Hebron is but a very few hours from Bethlehem, nobody imagined that the disturbances there could affect the latter place, or even render the road unsafe.

So we prepared for the much-desired visit to Bethlehem. The ride was delightful. Mary went with us. Our horses snuffed up the early morning air, and scampered over the plain.

Passing by the convent of Mar Elias and Rachel's tomb, the road, as it drew near to Bethlehem, wound among vineyards and fig-gardens, among which innumerable bee-catchers, in their brilliant plumage, were glancing to and fro. What a delightful scene of rural industry all around—terraces to the top of the hills, the little round watch-towers perched up and down, here and there, and smiling valleys clad in the bright foliage of the vines!

Barley harvest was going on in many places, the peasantry in their gay dresses working and singing in

chorus. Men, women, and children, all were together. The reaper was duly followed by the gleaner, and cattle followed the gleaner—oxen and camels, asses, sheep, and goats, eagerly cropping the fresh stubble, and picking up many a stray ear; while the very young children lay on their parents' cloaks, and were watched over by the dogs. It was the very scene that we could have wished to find—the very time in which Naomi and Ruth returned to the city of Bethlehem—in the beginning of barley harvest.

But even before pausing to catch the inspiration of this scene, we desired to visit the spot where our Saviour is supposed to have been born.

It is impossible to stand in the little crypt or grotto of the Nativity, to look on the silver star, which is inscribed with the simple words, "Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary," without feeling reverence and awe.

Our Saviour was born—born in Bethlehem—if not on this very spot, yet not far from hence. An event, the consequences of which are rolling forward, and will continue to roll on during the endless ages of eternity, is thus inseparably linked with a small space of this our earth. "Here!" is a wonderful word.

Yet the sense of reality was wanting. This narrow grotto, perfumed with incense, lighted with jewelled lamps—even the exquisite Italian paintings of our Saviour's birth, and of the adoration of the wise men—all seemed artificial. I felt oppressed, and longed to get away into the daylight, and sit beneath some olive-

tree in a quiet corner and breathe the fresh air, and look at Bethlehem and the blue sky, whence the real star shone and the angels sang.

It was a relief to be led away through rude passages, hewn in the rock, into the unadorned chamber where St Jerome wrote his translation of the Bible. The bare stone floor and whitewashed walls were very touching in their simplicity. Close at hand was a picture of his friends, the Lady Paula and her daughter. Among these worthies of ancient Christian Bethlehem, I could not help thinking of another, namely Vigilantius, also the friend of Jerome, and of his glowing pictures of the ploughmen of Bethlehem singing the Psalms of David, and hymns to David's blessed Son, while at work in the fields.

These thoughts were painfully dissipated by the next object to which our guide, an ignorant Spanish monk, directed our attention. It was a small glass case, containing a wax model of an infant's hand and arm.

This, he told us, was the very arm of one of the innocents slain by Herod, which was miraculously preserved of its original colour. The tiny fingers were covered with jewelled rings. The extravagant credulity of the monk could have been hardly believed, had we not seen him the moment after hold the case towards a Bethlehemite who followed us, and who kissed it with every mark of reverence. It was easier to suppose him deceived than deceiving.

We passed the outer church, no longer silent and

empty as on our arrival. A large number of Bethlehemites had collected, and spread on the floor various articles of their own manufacture for sale; and the moment we appeared we were beset by them.

We were not yet accustomed to the idea of buying in a church, and Mary said to some of the foremost, "This is a church; why do you buy and sell in it?"

They laughed. One said, "Nobody prays *here*—only inside;" another, "Custom—it is our custom."

"You hear that," said Mary to us; "that word custom governs these Arabs. 'Custom!' I once asked a Bethlehemite why they don't shorten the road to Bethlehem by avoiding all the windings and turnings, and go straight. The answer was, 'A'adeh'—(it is our) custom. They wear their shoes slipshod because it is a'adeh; they sit cross-legged because it is a'adeh; their women are left in ignorance because it is a'adeh; and, worse still, they will submit to insult and oppression because it is a'adeh. The town Christians don't wear red shoes or bright-coloured clothes, though they may, because it was their fathers' a'adeh to wear black; the peasantry will allow soldiers to rob them, or take double taxes, because it is a'adeh."

"No doubt such a feeling has great disadvantages," said Walter; "and it must render a people slow to receive the improvements which intercourse with civilised nations would otherwise bring among them. But, on the other hand, what a delightful thing it is that this very feeling has preserved to us the customs and manners of ancient times! Why, the East would be

spoilt for ever if the style of dress were changed, or the usages done away which have belonged to it from time immemorial. Blessed be the a'adeh which has preserved to us the forms of speech, hallowed to our ears from earliest infancy. I just now caught a man saying to another, 'Salaam aleikum,' and the other replied, ''Alaik es-salaam;' and look down there—at those two long-bearded men greeting each other. Look how they bow, and touch hands, and kiss! Why, they might be Jacob and Esau meeting after their long separation. And there—see that group of boys rise up for the old man passing by."

We had another illustration very forcibly brought before us; for the assemblage of shoes, put off by their owners at the church-door, was not easily passed. How each one was to recognise his own, was a puzzle to me. Walter had warmed to his subject, or rather his words had been pent up all day, and he went on—"Then, again, the costumes. Here have I been all day long feasting my eyes upon the originals, whence the old masters derived their flowing robes, their rich reds and blues. Look at those two women—see how the colours contrast and blend, just as you see them in a cathedral window! There now, see that fellow setting off to run (by the by, he is taking off his shoes first)—he has girded up his loins, and is running with a will; and those young women bearing water-jars on their heads; and those camels being made to kneel down. I say again, Blessed a'adeh. Who would ever venture to paint a picture without it? Why, it would be profana-

tion to dress up the prophets and apostles in a fancy costume of one's own choosing."

"We are not all painters of pictures, Mr Russell," said Mary, smiling; "but you are right: daily life in this country is invested with an inexpressible charm by all these unchanged forms of speech, these habits and manners, which to us appear to belong to the very Bible itself. There is another advantage in this reverence for 'a'adeh,' which you will get the benefit of. They not only respect their own customs, but allow ours to be of equal importance. An Arab will not smile or be offended at our directly opposite manners when he recollects the word a'adeh. It is Frank a'adeh to shave off their beards, wear tight clothes, sit on a chair. It is a'adeh for us ladies to appear unveiled. For the sake of a'adeh they will even forgive our not taking off our shoes, or our omitting the proper forms of salutation. It is not their a'adeh, an Arab will say. And now, Mr Russell, it is a'adeh to give this man a backsheesh for his guidance."

In the open air once more, upon the esplanade, all the little boys of Bethlehem seemed to have congregated around our horses, and were clamorous for backsheesh. Of course, some was given to those who held the horses.

Mary said to one of the older lads a word which I afterwards found very useful—"Aib alaik," (shame upon you,) and he instantly replied, "a'adeh." It was amusing to see them, as we rode along, running on before that they might get a better peep at our faces; and the women came out on the house-tops to see us pass.

"How very handsome and fair some of those women are; and the men also, tall, straight, and bold-looking. I have not seen such men yet in Palestine. This is a thriving place."

New houses were being built, and there was an air of activity and business which was very pleasant. Many of the shops on the ground-floor were open, and we could see the men at work, carving shells, or polishing beads by rubbing them to and fro upon a mat. One was a carpenter's shop, and the workman was sitting on the ground with a piece of wood between his feet, into which he was boring a hole by means of a strange-looking tool like a bow, in the centre of which was a long piercer or gimlet, which was made to revolve rapidly by means of the bow-string. Close by was another, boring a pipe-stick in the same manner; and next came a forge, where swords were being made; and then two or three gunsmiths binding the long barrel, for which Arab guns are famous, to the stocks with hoops of brass.

"The Bethlemites are a formidable set," said Mary; "they can fight, and do fight fiercely sometimes. Is it not remarkable that this town, which was once least in Judea, should now be so important a place? After Jerusalem, it ranks with Hebron in size, and in the character and determination of its people."

"Are there any Mohammedans here?"

"Very few. The people are almost all Christians. You will soon begin to distinguish a Christian from a Moslem village by the greater cleanliness and activity

of its people. They don't build fresh houses in Moslem villages, or, indeed, do anything that they can help."

The chief purpose for which we had come to Bethlehem was not to be forgotten or lost sight of; and we wandered about until my brother had found a spot which pleased him for his picture. It was south-east of the town, and answered extremely well as far as the landscape went; but he was desirous of ascertaining whether the Bethlehemites do ever take this road to Bethlehem on their way to or from Moab. "For," said he, "if I can only find out their a'adeh, I shall be sure to have found the road by which Naomi and Ruth returned."

It was too late for us to go back into the town, and make inquiries on this point; and besides, Mary suggested that it would be better for Walter to get her father to come over with him some day, as he could better ask about it than she could. So, after resting a while under some trees, we turned our horses' heads towards Jerusalem.

When we had got nearly as far as the Convent of St Elijah, Mary suddenly checked her horse, and said, "What a pity we did not gather some peas as we passed them!"

"I saw no peas: where were they?"

"We have passed them. It is too late to go back now, but they were by the road-side," she said, looking a little mysterious; "and it is very wonderful, the more you gather the more there are. The pilgrims take away large quantities. I see you don't believe me; but

I will take you some day, and you shall gather some: they belong to the Virgin Mary. And now look on your left at that stone with the hollow in it: that is the mark left by the body of Elijah the prophet, when he lay down and slept here on his way southwards to the wilderness. On account of this the convent is named Mar Elias—St Elijah; and he stood here, whence you can see both Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and prophesied of Christ that 'He shall be born there,' pointing to the right hand, 'and crucified there,' pointing to Jerusalem on the left."

"That story of the stone is a foolish one," observed Walter; "but it is interesting to find traditions still kept alive on such a road as this about persons who must in reality have travelled over it."

"You will say so when I have shown you the next place, Mr Russell, just beyond the convent. There! is not that evening view of Jerusalem beautiful, with its foreground of the plain, and all the Scopus for a background?"

"Yes; but the most striking part of this view, (after the city itself,) is the succession of mountains which lie back to the north and north-west."

"That one to the north, such a lovely violet colour, is about half-way to Nabloos; and the little speck you see projecting on its western crest is a very large oak-tree. Then along the ridge, on the horizon, still more to the left, I can make out Beeroth—there where that very bright speck is glittering—the side of a new house; and of course you know the highest point of

all, still more west—Neby Samwil, where Jews and Moslems believe Samuel is buried. You will like to ride there some day. The view of the Mediterranean is very fine from the minaret on the top. But now you must look a little nearer."

So saying, she stopped beside a fine old well in the middle of the road: the great circular stone which had served as mouth, and some other hollows for troughs were lying around in picturesque confusion. But they all had the appearance of great age.

"This is the well of the Wise Men. When they were going to Bethlehem after having seen Herod, and amid the excitement produced in Jerusalem, they had forgotten the star, and were in trouble about it. They stopped at this well to drink, and stooping to draw water, behold! there was the reflection of the star in the water. And they did not lose it again; but it went before them until it stood over the house."

"That is a very pretty legend indeed," said Walter. Like many other pretty things, it had the effect of making us all very silent as we rode on. Perhaps we were all thinking—I know I was—of that great king Herod, whose proud and lonely burial-place we had this day seen. Methought yon towers of the Holy City rose yet grander to my view,—that I could distinguish which mighty pile was Phasaelus, and which told of Mariamne's cruel fate,—that the sunset played around the golden pinnacles of the magnificent temple, scarce yet completed—gorgeous creation of a splendid mind. There, in the sumptuous cloisters, was an assemblage

of anxious men; ancients whose visages were furrowed with midnight study; venerable men, whose serious countenances—peaceful and holy in expression—were lit up with eagerness. They were searching ancient records. A king's messenger stood waiting to receive a decision from the lips of the high priest, who was reading from a parchment roll.

And now the sunlight shifted. The glow passed off from the temple, and illumined the palaces of Zion. Within,—not a sound but the drops of the fountains plashing in their marble basins. None dared speak or move. The terrible king was in one of his most fearful moods. He sat alone, restless, in suspense, torn with jealousy. The fabric of his ambition was tottering; terror and hatred were striving for the mastery. The gentle star of Bethlehem shone not for him.

"Miss Russell, we must ride faster—the sun is set." The words startled me. A cold gray had overspread the battlements and towers—the vision faded. We gave our horses the rein, and just reached the gate as it was being closed.

CHAPTER XIV.

DISTURBANCES OUT OF DOORS AND IN-DOORS—THE QUEEN'S PORTRAIT.

ONE Sunday morning my brother and I were on our way to church, and had reached the Castle Square,

when we suddenly found our progress impeded by a mob of people, in a state of tumult, screaming, yelling, and pushing each other.

I was frightened, and thought there was some fanatic outbreak, or something equally terrible; but Walter, who was taller, could see that the crowd was gathering round a wretched little wooden house or shed, which was used as a custom-house; and we drew back a little, to a spot whence we could see from a safe distance what was going on.

The house was soon demolished. The Turkish soldiers sat quietly on the battlements, looking on at a few yards' distance—until at last one officer and two men undertook, when the mischief was done, to disperse the mob, which, after some good-natured trouble, they effected, and enabled the wretched victims, who had been trembling within the house, to leave it, with their bedding, account-books, &c., &c., carried in bundles on their backs. The scene was sufficiently grotesque, now that the idea of danger had passed—the variety of costumes, the howlings, the fraternisation of persons in the work of hurling great stones; the old bearded Orientals tucking up their sleeves and skirts with the enjoyment of children; and the clumsy movements of full-skirted, full-trousered lads, whose slippers were generally cast off, and tucked under one arm. They tore and carried off pieces of the broken wood to exhibit in triumphal procession.

We were afterwards told the history of the thing, as follows. The Sultan had recently suppressed the octroi-

duties, which have existed ever since his accession, and which pressed heavily on the poor, besides giving licence for intolerable rudeness of the soldiery at the city gates. The Pasha had meant to retain the levy of those duties till the conclusion of the year; but the mob heard that the kâdi refused to sanction it. This turned out afterwards to be a mistake; the kâdi was of the same mind as the Pasha.

Funny though it seemed, this bearded, berobed, and turbaned mob chiefly consisted of the small shopkeepers and their friends. And so the custom-house was abolished.

After church in the evening, we walked down from the Jaffa Gate, and in the opposite Valley of Gihon, beside the immense pool, which is now broken and useless as a reservoir. This was a favourite walk of my brother's. Besides being cool and shady, the view is very picturesque where the Valley of Gihon deepens and falls into that of Hinnom. We turned aside, and sat under the shelter of some rocks, upon the aqueduct which here crosses the road on its way from Solomon's Pools and Bethlehem to Jerusalem.

As usual, when we were quietly alone, our father had been the subject of our thoughts and conversation. We could not help feeling, as we looked at all the objects around, how he would have delighted in these scenes, and how his remarks would have given fresh interest to the dearly-loved objects which he had so often desired to behold,—the quiet, secluded terrace of Aceldama; the depths of Hinnom; the craggy rocks

where Tophet must have been; the king's gardens far down at the very bottom; a few houses of Siloam; the Mount of Olives; and the bold, steep outlines of Mount Zion right before us. How would he not have enjoyed sitting here this very moment!

The subject of the burial-ground, miserable and dreary as it was, occupied both our minds, yet was avoided by both. At last Walter said—

"I almost hope permission to enclose the burial-ground will be refused."

"Why? Oh, I hope not."

"Because, dear, I should like to lay him there, under the olive-trees, on that terrace opposite. How quiet and retired it looks! And he would have chosen to be laid on Mount Zion."

"Yes, indeed, if that could be done. It is a lovely spot; but I fear it never will be allowed."

"One thing, Emily, I am resolved on. I shall not leave this country until something is done, if we should stay here ten years. I was talking to the consul about it yesterday. He thinks that by perseverance we may succeed; and he is going to persevere in writing to Constantinople and London until a proper burial-ground is accorded to the English. He was shocked at having to bury his English servant in that place; but I did not know of this spot, and of course did not suggest the change."

"We must wait and see; but I hope they will rather let us change than build a wall there. And you see that, although yonder terrace has so quiet and secluded

an appearance, it is but just below all the other Christian burial-grounds on the top of the mountain. The Latins, and Greeks, and Armenians have all their cemeteries there—why should not we?"

Our conversation was interrupted by the dashing past of a horseman, at full speed, on the Bethlehem road. He galloped down the valley, and up again, and in at the Jaffa Gate. When we reached it, we found the poor horse just within the gate—dead. He had carried his rider thus far with the true spirit of the Arabian steed; and there dropped, never more to rise. There was bustle and excitement around the gate. The drums were beating to arms in the Castle. Dr Baron was standing by, and from him we learned that the courier had ridden in two hours from Hebron, with tidings that the Pasha had been wounded or killed by the rebels, and that he was come to summon a surgeon of the garrison; "though," added our informant sarcastically, "if he be dead, a surgeon will be of little use."

Presently all the soldiers, excepting thirty-five, marched out in haste towards Hebron, and the gates closed, leaving the whole city of Jerusalem to the protection of this small force. I thought of the morning's tumult, but then remembered that the mob had not appeared very formidable on that occasion; so, what two soldiers had done on a small emergency, thirty-five might be able to effect on a greater.

On reaching home, I found my servants in great consternation. Six silver teaspoons had vanished, and

were nowhere to be found. The poor things were very unhappy, and seemed to fear suspicion of the theft would fall on them. Constantine looked in despair, and Helaneh was crying and beating her breast.

I had no idea of that kind; and, after a vigorous but unsuccessful search, dismissed them for the night.

The scene for Walter's picture had now been found. He was very impatient to go again to Bethlehem and finally settle it; but Mr Andersen was too much occupied just then. Meanwhile there was plenty to be done. He used to get up very early in the morning, and wander out by himself, thinking out the various points. His was no sudden inspiration, in which fancy had all the praise or bore all the blame. Once the general plan was laid down, he worked bit by bit, point by point, until all that he intended to bring into the canvas was determined, and the various parts harmonised with each other.

"My one great object, Emily," he used to say, "is truth—truth in the spirit as well as in the details of my picture. My greatest ambition would be to have produced a representation in which an educated Oriental would recognise my theme, and would find nothing to jar against his perception of the reality of the subordinate parts."

"I am afraid, dear, it will be long before you get such an Oriental. I was putting the prints into my portfolio yesterday, when Helaneh came and looked

over my shoulder. She looked so funny when I showed her one or two, saying 'taib,' and then turning up her eyes, that I asked her what that was—showing her your large-coloured sketch of a camel. She actually pointed to the brown pitcher on the table, and said it was that; and the little girl sitting on the floor playing with a kitten she called a rose—I suppose because her frock was pink. The kitten she could not see; but she recognised and clapped her hands at my scarlet anemone—feeling it, to see if it were real or not."

"Then, Emily, the only fault is that her eyes are untrained. I suppose she has never been accustomed to see things on paper."

"And yet she is a Christian, and ought to be accustomed to pictures of the saints."

"True; you must try her with the portraits of the Duke of Wellington and of the Queen, and see if she can make out any difference between them. I observe, in going through the bazaars, how Moslem artists avoid anything like human figures. On the wall of a house I found a ship daubed in black and red, but not a sailor to be seen, though all the oars were at work. A good many of the Moslem houses have flowers painted on the whitewash around their door, but the colours are most primitive—red, yellow, green, blue—and not the slightest attempt at shading or perspective. I suspect these would be the two great difficulties to an Oriental eye, and that simple figures, all alone, and in full front, would be understood by them. To be sure, for Helaneh not to recognise my camel was too

bad, but then you see he is not in profile, but foreshortened; and so the mass might be a brown jug, with his head and neck for handle. Depend upon it, she would understand a camel in profile."

When breakfast was over, (at which, by the by, we had a dish of the first ripe fruit of the season—yellow apricots,) I tried Helaneh with the pictures of the Queen and the Duke of Wellington, and with great success; for, on seeing her Majesty, she crossed herself very devoutly, and said it was the Adarah, (the Virgin,) and asked why there was no gold on it, (meaning the tinsel glory used in Greek pictures of the saints.)

The Duke of Wellington she declared to be Walter Bek!

That very day I saw a similar mistake made at the consul's house by a native. The portrait of the Queen (coloured, in her robes of state) was saluted by him in the same way. As soon as his eye caught it, he crossed himself repeatedly. Mr Wells, the consul, observed it also, and I saw a smile in his eye, but he was engaged speaking to another person. Presently, however, he directed attention to her Majesty's portrait, and it was amusing to see the expression on the face of the man when he found that he had been crossing himself to the Queen of England.

The conversation that followed was no less amusing. The guests rose, and closely inspected the picture, and asked various questions.

"How old is the Queen? is she married?"

"Yes."

"Then how can she be Queen? of course, she is only the king's wife."

"Oh no, she is reigning Queen."

"And her husband"——

"He is a prince from another country, and has his own rank, but does not direct the government of England."

"Ajeebeh," (wonderful.) "Mashallah," (what hath God wrought,) passed from mouth to mouth, and they looked at each other.

"Can she read?"

"Certainly, and write"——

"Wonderful, wonderful!" And the consul showed her Majesty's signature, and explained the perverse English manner of writing from left to right, instead of from right to left, in the natural Oriental fashion.

It was plain they all thought our way very awkward. Meanwhile, Mrs Wells was quietly sketching some of these good people, and showed them her performance, in perfect confidence that they would not guess what it was. She told me that the Moslems have a superstition, which is largely shared by all Orientals, that whoever possesses their portrait has the power of killing the original by shooting or wounding the picture. Another belief of the Moslems is, that it is wrong to paint pictures of human beings, because at the resurrection the painter will be required to put souls into the bodies he has thus formed.

I have not before spoken of the consul and his wife, Mr and Mrs Wells. They had not long been in

Jerusalem. Walter had met them on his way out from England. I called on Mrs Wells, and soon found we should agree in liking the country, and the various circumstances of Jerusalem life.

Walter found the consul a pleasant companion in his walks and rides, inasmuch as he had read a good deal, and they had many tastes in common.

We met an English traveller there, who had just come from Hebron, and he told us that the Pasha had had not been killed at all, or even wounded; it was somebody else who had been hurt by the going off of his own gun. He also said that the town of Hebron had been taken by storm, and pillaged, and that the poor Jews had suffered very much.

CHAPTER XV.

ARABS AND TURKS.

NEXT morning I joined my brother in his early walk, and we met camels laden with all sorts of spoil—kettles and pots, and pillows, and pipes, and guns, and cloth robes, and women's jackets, with a soldier perched on the top of all, or else leading the animal by the halter; and if the soldiers had looked disorderly before, they now looked ruffianly, with the insolent pride of victory in their sunburnt faces. I particularly observed how well fed they all looked in their ragged

clothes. Later in the day, Walter found the stream of arrivals not at all diminished, and the bazaars were filled with the plunder which was being sold by them. A few days afterwards, the Pasha returned with certificates, signed by all the inhabitants of Hebron, to the effect that his Excellency had deserved the gratitude of the town for having prevented his troops from molesting any one, or plundering a single article. We were riding on the plain, and happened to see him return, surrounded by his staff. He bowed politely to us as we passed—I suppose as being Europeans.

He was slight, and rather young; but although he also was sunburnt, there was a languid and not agreeable expression in his countenance. The horse he rode was a beauty—bay, with black legs and tail; such an exquisite little head, and free, proud action! It was a present from the sheikh, in consideration of his installation by main force.

We heard much of this Sheikh Abderrahman-el-Amar. He was a peasant, rude, ignorant, and cruel, but strong-handed. His grandfather had been sheikh before him. Then Turkish policy had, as usual, finding the family too strong, encouraged a rival aspirant, who governed the town for some time, until he, in his turn, was allowed to be worsted by this Abderrahman and his faction. He murdered his rival with his own hand in the streets of Hebron, and would not suffer any one to bury the body for three days. His oppressive cruelty had now driven the people to rise against him; and they drove him out, and chose another. But

it suited the policy, or the purse, of the Pasha to reinstate him by force; and this glorious end had been achieved by the troops.

As we returned homewards, among the broken stony ground, between the upper pool and the Jaffa road, we saw a gray fox walking leisurely about. We scampered after him; he moved a little faster, but not much. By keeping among the rocks, which he much resembled in colour, he bade defiance to our attempts at capture, and at last escaped at his own leisure.

That evening we had a long consultation as to how the originals for Walter's two principal figures—Naomi and Ruth—were to be obtained. To get Oriental women to sit for their likeness, after what we had heard, seemed very improbable. And yet these must be portraits, and Naomi must be a Jewess. We did not know any of the Jews, and had seen none of their houses or families.

Mr Andersen or Mary would doubtless be able to introduce us to some of their Jewish friends; but would any of them be persuaded to sit? Here was a difficulty indeed. But difficulties only feed determination, and Walter was determined to have a really Jewish Naomi.

So we arranged to join Mrs Andersen's early breakfast next morning, and try to get some help. On our way thither—preferring the country air to walking through the streets of the town—we passed round from the Damascus to the Jaffa Gate. It was still very early, and the women were coming in to market with

baskets on their heads—some filled with screaming cocks and hens, some with eggs by the hundred, some with vegetables.

In the gateway we were stopped by an altercation between the Turkish sentinel on guard and a poor peasant who was driving in a load of faggots on his donkey. The soldier had put down his gun, and was pulling vigorously at one or two of the longest sticks —which, however, would not come. The peasant offered to take it out himself, but was kicked aside. It was evident the Turk had not understood the poor man's Arabic, and thought he was only asking mercy. At last, with a violent tug, the rope gave way, and down came all the faggots to the ground. The soldier leisurely picked out the best for himself; while the poor Arab, almost crying, was standing by, afraid to do aught but wait till the other allowed him to put his faggots together again as best he might. Meanwhile, a half scream from behind caused us to turn round. Another soldier had rummaged over the chickens in the basket of a peasant woman, and failing to find any eggs there, was fumbling about her dress. Her scream attracted our attention just as he snatched two eggs out of her bosom, and sprang away; otherwise, the Arab man, who had quietly borne his own wrong, would have certainly felled him to the ground with a club which he aimed at him. To touch a woman was insufferable, even from their Turkish masters.

Walter had made a spring, too, in the direction of

the miscreant, but he was out of reach. The other only laughed, as the woman went on vociferating what must have been curses; and the peasant muttered between his teeth while he tied up his sticks.

Walter was boiling with indignation, and told the story at breakfast to Mr Andersen.

"Surely the country will be driven to revolt if such things are done."

"It would be so in Europe; and it may be so here, if things are allowed to go too far," said Mr Andersen; "but it is astonishing how much the Arabs will bear. They have a great reverence for authority, and worship success. So that it is easy for a bold man among themselves to obtain the ascendancy, and easier still for a foreign nation to subdue them."

"But the peasantry did once revolt during the times of the Egyptians, under Ibrahim Pasha?"

"Yes, they did, and managed to take Jerusalem, as I was an unwilling witness; but, by very vigorous measures, Ibrahim Pasha recovered his dominion over them, and they were completely subdued. It is singular how, under the present system of Turkish rule, the Arab peasantry distinguish between a tyrannical or extortionate Pasha, and the Sultan and his government. Theoretically, and I believe really, at heart they are loyal to the latter; but, at the same time, they do not hesitate to rebel openly—become 'a'asy,' as it is called, against the Pasha for the time being. An Arab will say, 'I am not "a'asy" against the dowleh, (government,) God forbid; only against the Pasha, for such and such'

a reason.' It is the same with the peasantry among themselves. They will rise against the oppression of the sheikh personally, without in the least imagining themselves rebellious against the Sultan."

"I am surprised to find so very few Turks in Jerusalem," said Walter.

"There are none but the Pasha, who is changed every year; the few troops, and the kâdi, who is also changed every year."

"And how do they manage to rule so large a country, and keep down the native Arabs?"

"Various causes combine to render this possible. First, as I have said, reverence for the lawful authority of the sultan, as kaliph of the Mohammedans. Secondly, the divisions among the Arabs themselves, which would make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to unite for any common object.

"The only bond which I can imagine capable of uniting them under one head, would be religious enthusiasm; and that has died out almost entirely. Division is their bane, and there is division everywhere.

"The Hebron district is at hereditary feud with the adjoining one of Arkoob; that again with its neighbour, under Aboo Gosh. Within the districts themselves are rivalries between different members of the sheikh's family. The different pretenders have each adherent villages; and thus the clans are subdivided into parties; and, finally, in every village, without exception, you will find jealousies, if not fighting, between the actual sheikh and the would-be sheikh, even though

they should be brothers. And when you add to all this the Arab law of vengeance—by which the nearest relation of a murdered man is bound to avenge his death, which again involves his life being taken by the relatives of the other, and so on *ad infinitum*—we may well judge that to unite this nation for one object would be very difficult."

"Have they no patriotism?"

"Not in the proper sense of the word. An Arab will not leave his own village if he can help it; and if he is compelled to do so, the great object of his life will be to return thither. If called to arms by the sheikh whom he follows, he will instantly obey, and fight enthusiastically, even to the death. But it is because the cause is personally his own; because the sheikh is his mother's father's uncle, or his cousin's cousin's cousin, or his grandfather's sister's son's grandson. There is no feeling of fighting for his country. The opposite faction fight as desperately and as long, and yet they also live in the same district of the same country as he does, and their branch of the clan has been as long in the land as his own.

"Then there is a very remarkable separation between the various districts of this small country. An inhabitant of Gebel-el-Kuds, or Gebel Khaleel—the mountain (*i.e.*, district) of Jerusalem or Hebron—has no sympathies with one from Gebel Nabloos, (Samaria,) the Sahal, (Plain of Gaza or Sharon,) and still less with those of Galilee, Phœnicia, or Lebanon.

"Though speaking the same language, observing the

same immemorial usages, possessing the same religion, there is no bond of union between them. The Arabs of Syria have no coherency, they are a disintegrated nation; or perhaps they may be found to consist of the remnants of various nations, which never were really united."

"And how, then, can this handful of Turks govern them?"

"For this very reason. The Turks are a subtle people. They are very adroit in ruling through the native sheikhs, and turn these clans and factions most cleverly to their own account. A Pasha comes here to govern Palestine. He knows nothing of the language of the people; despises it as harsh; generally can neither read nor write his own; has only a nominal authority over the few hundred soldiers in garrison, whose officers are only bound to obey the commander-in-chief at Damascus. The various clans and rival sheikhs—perhaps nearly equal in power—crowd around the new Pasha, each hoping to obtain for his own faction the influence of the dowleh, which would of course turn the balance in his favour. The wily Turk receives all, hears all, flatters all, and accepts presents from all. He soon finds out which party, being weak, may be strengthened with advantage—a twofold advantage: first, to his pocket, for the weak one will pay for countenance; and, secondly, to his rule, for in proportion as the weak one is strengthened the stronger rival is necessarily weakened. The strong one soon perceives this, and begins to ply the Pasha with presents on the

other side: this also tends to weaken and bring him down."

"I see: the weaker party is fostered, to counterbalance the strong: it is ingenious."

"Yes; and faction is played off against faction; rival clans are employed to chastise each other, and do the work which ought to be done by the troops of the government."

"But how do they manage when two sheikhs are so nearly balanced in power that it is impossible to say which is weakest?"

"In that case both are encouraged equally. Government commissions for the same post are given to both; arms given to both; and they are encouraged to fight till one shall have obtained a decided advantage over the other."

"But if, on the other hand, the disparity is so great between the rivals that there is no chance of raising the weak one, so as to be a formidable opponent?"

"Then the strong one is left to himself for a while; allowed to gain the height of his ambition—oppress and plunder the people under him at will. Poor unconscious victim! he is only being fattened for the slaughter. When his money bags have nearly attained the desired dimensions, intrigue is set to work, treachery is employed, sudden seizure and banishment, or a bullet sped by his rival, at once avenge all his crimes, pacify the district, and enrich the Pasha."

"What a system! Thank you very much. One must be years here to be able to observe all these things."

"It is now late, and you must kindly excuse me," said Mr Andersen, rising. "I have an appointment; but"—turning to Walter—"you said you had a special object to-day. Do you need anything particular which I can do for you?"

"I am in perplexity about an original for my picture. Naomi's must be a Jewish face, and I have not a single acquaintance among the Jews. Can you help me in this?"

"I shall be most happy to visit some of my Jewish friends with you, and perhaps you may see some one who will answer your purpose. If you can, be ready this afternoon at two o'clock."

So that was arranged, and Mr Andersen went to his business. Mrs Andersen asked us if we had been through the Jewish quarter. No, we had not.

"Then I should advise you to go and walk through; you may see some one thus who would do for you."

"But are not all the women veiled?"

"Oh no," said Mrs Andersen, "not the Jewesses. They wear the white sheet, but not the coloured handkerchief over the face. That is only worn by the Moslem and Christian women; but then the Jewesses will not venture out of their own quarter. You know this house is on the verge of the Jewish quarter, Mount Zion."

"There is another place," said Mary, "where Mr Russell might find Jewesses—at our hospital. If you have not yet seen it, go, by all means; it is worth seeing, both in itself, and as being the first and only hospital

in Jerusalem; and it is entirely for Jews. Dr Baron will, I am sure, gladly show it to you."

"He has offered to do so. Come, Emily, *nil desperandum*. I may yet get a Jewess to sit for me."

"Ah, that is quite a different affair, Mr Russell. You may find her; but to get her to sit for her portrait will be very difficult, I warn you."

"*Nil desperandum*," again said Walter; and we set off on a pilgrimage through the Jewish quarter, accompanied by a bright little boy, whom Mr Andersen desired to conduct us.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE JEWISH QUARTER—SEARCHING FOR A NAOMI.

"How is the gold become dim! How is the most fine gold changed!"—LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

How shall I describe the approach to the Jewish quarter?

First we passed a labyrinth of lanes, in and out, back and forwards. Then we found ourselves in an arched thoroughfare, where people were sitting drinking coffee, smoking, and playing various games, something like draughts and chess. Again we passed through a place where there were immense heaps of wheat and barley on mats on the ground, peasants selling and townspeople buying. This was the corn market.

Another turn brought us into the bazaar, a long covered way, with holes in the top to let in light and air. Anything like the scene here I had never beheld.

The place was alive with people going to and fro, jostling each other and being jostled; hundreds were pushing each other about in the passage, about four feet wide, which separated the row of stalls on each side from each other. The shops are a kind of cupboards, built upon a stone ledge three feet from the ground; the folding doors of the cupboard open towards the street, and generally the lower part opens downwards, so as to form a shop-board upon which the owner sits and displays his wares, smoking or screaming in Arabic to a neighbour a shop or two distant. Peasantry in striped cloaks; effendies in fine robes; a Bedawee sheikh smoking as he walked along in immense red morocco boots, and with a train of followers wondering and wandering; sellers of sherbet, with a jar under their arm, and chinking brass cups in their hands while they bawled forth the virtues of the drink; water-carriers with huge goatskins on their back, blocking up the way as they sidled along; pale emaciated Polish Jews in fur caps, and stately rabbis in gray turbans; peasant women with squeaking chickens on their heads, and children riding astride on their hip, or slung in a hammock at their back, sometimes spinning with a distaff as they walk or squat on the ground; black slaves cracking jokes with the shopkeepers as they lounged along; a European consul preceded by his kawasses, who, by poking right and left with their silver sticks,

barely succeeded in making way for him; soldiers leaning against the edge of a stall; Jewesses, in their white sheet, purchasing vegetables or a bit of calico print; a Turkish officer, in brass-plated fez and blue uniform, at a tobacco cutter's, followed by a black pipe-bearer dressed in a uniform the caricature of his master's, and exchanging gossip with a grinning woman slave, who was buying sweetmeats at the next stall; a dandy young effendi choosing an amber rosary at another; some screaming, all talking, some cursing, and some saluting; one fellah dictating a letter or petition to a public scribe, who sat cross-legged on his stall, as did indeed all the vendors or merchants; two grave-looking men perched in another, (the back of which was filled with piles of cloth, scarlet, blue, green, violet,) smoking pipes, and settling accounts; a tailor embroidering a silk vest, sky-blue with gold; a jeweller setting a diamond ring; a grocer stirring a huge bowl of sour milk, white as snow, and calling to purchasers; a burly peasant buying a striped handkerchief of gay red and yellow silk for his head, another leading a bleating sheep, or a mare and foal, through the throng, and a third driving a donkey laden with wood, and screaming to people to take care of their backs or their faces; but it was impossible for the animal to pass faster than the living stream would allow.

At a sudden turn we came upon a story-teller reciting Arab tales to a circle of smoking listeners. They were, however, a little aside from the general concourse in a side alley. We turned up another way, and climbing up a flight of steep steps, and up pre-

cipitous lanes, escaped from the din and bustle, and found ourselves in the quiet of the Jewish quarter.

The houses were generally dilapidated in appearance. Broken doors and lattices, which looked as if they meant to fall on our heads, were the only objects which relieved the bare blank walls. But further on we found some of the houses had window sills, in which were pots of crimson stock or carnation; and then some of the doors stood open, and we could see the neatly-paved court within, and the vine trellis, though in others there was nothing but a heap of vegetable parings, dust, and every kind of rubbish accumulated inside the door. Presently we began to see something of the inhabitants of this exclusive quarter. An old woman passed by and peered at us through a huge pair of silver-edged spectacles. Her features were strongly marked; on her head she wore a scarlet and yellow cotton handkerchief tightly bound round. Nothing over the face, but the white sheet thrown over her head. It was not carefully arranged, as with the Arabs, but simply thrown on.

The Arab sheet is long, touches the ground; hers did not reach below the knees, and showed a sort of coat of calico print which was, like the sheet, dingy and torn. Under her arm she carried an old book, and was knitting as she walked briskly along. There was none of the languor of the Arab townswomen in her manner or in her face; on the contrary, though haggard and worn, it had a quick, searching, intelligent glance.

This was an old Polish Jewess.

Two beautiful little boys were running after her—such eyes and rosy cheeks! but they were perfect little miniatures of old men in their dress—broad brimmed black hats, and long coats down to their heels, of greasy serge, also black.

Next we met a stately Moslem, counting his beads as he walked along.

"That man looks like the lord paramount here," observed Walter; and so he probably was, for we afterwards learned that the Jewish houses are the property of the Moslems, who derive a large proportion of their income from letting them to the Jews—poor things; these men get as much money as they can from them, and leave their wretched dwellings to tumble and decay, and cisterns out of repair, which can therefore hold no water. And now for some time we walked along and saw no one in the narrow street. No one appeared: probably they were all inside the houses; but it had a deserted air that oppressed me. All at once we found ourselves in another long narrow street where all was life and bustle. It seemed to be the bazaar of the Jews, not covered in like the other bazaar, but simply a lane with shops or stalls on each side, and men, women, and children going to and fro, bustling as if they had much to do. Here I saw plenty of women dressed like the old lady above mentioned, both selling and buying. There were also young girls dressed in the same fashion, but rosy and merry-looking, and with the same fine bright eyes that the little boys had. It was a very

different scene from that presented by the Arab bazaar. There all was profusion—mountains of corn, incredible abundance of vegetables and dried fruits, and spicery and confectionery, and piles of cloth and calicoes; well-to-do-looking shopkeepers, generally reclining comfortably among their wares; and the purchasers, whether Arab, negro, or Turk, fat, well-fed, and well-clad. But the little shops here bore an aspect of poverty that went to one's heart.

One had diminutive stores of rice, dingy-looking sugar, and dried fish exposed; a poor pale-faced woman was buying a little oil for a very small lamp. Another passed, carrying a sickly child in her arms. She had bought some vegetables at a stall, where both vegetables and fruit looked like refuse from the other bazaar. A little boy, a pretty child dressed like a little old man, was buying two tiny loaves from a shop-board, where there were only about eight for sale, and a small basket of eggs. Another shop contained a few pieces of calico print, as offset to the old clothes which hung around. Next came a neat little place with a few bottles bearing Hebrew labels, and an emaciated looking man of middle age seated at a little table on which lay medicine scales. This was an apothecary's shop, and he was intent on a large tattered volume, also in Hebrew. Indeed, most of the shops contained some Hebrew inscription or other; I suppose notices of what was for sale within, and very curious it was to see them. In spite of the poverty-stricken aspect of both place and people, we were much interested; for intelligence, that

poverty could not quench, shone forth from many a pair of deep-set eyes, and made the pale faces seem all the paler. This was especially the case with those men who wore black fur-trimmed caps or broad beaver hats.

We remarked that both men and boys wore curls depending on each side of the face. Walter was unwilling to begin to sketch on this his first appearance among them; it was evident we ourselves were objects of considerable curiosity, and we feared to offend or alarm them; but he could not resist jotting down one or two faces on a card which he concealed in his hand, they were so very striking. One was that of an old man with piercing eyes and long white beard. The lights and shades of his face, half concealed by his broad-slouching hat, would have made a Rembrandt study, in which assuredly the effect would have been concentrated in his eyes. They glowed with a deep light almost unearthly.

The other was of a lovely little child, perhaps two years old, which stood looking up in its mother's face, as she was buying a pair of chickens from an elderly Jew, of a very different type from those above described. He reminded me of my old acquaintance the glazier, both in height, general expression, and dress; which latter consisted of jacket and full trousers to the knee, with gaiters of coarse brown cloth, and red Arab shoes: whereas I saw that the others wore shoes of European colour and shape. One or two shops farther on we saw a man at work making European shoes, and next him was a tailor in flowing black robes, (old, to be sure, and torn,)

with a huge pair of spectacles on his nose. The women were many of them old and haggard. The middle-aged ones had features which must once have been fine, but the beauty was effaced by want, and that fatigued look which accompanies want. Some looked distressingly wretched and ill. There were some girls of twelve or thirteen, with rosy cheeks and bright eyes. One set, the Polish or German, wore the white sheet, like the woman we had met at first; and I now saw the upper part of the dress consisted of a kind of stomacher of some gay colour, and a broad frill or ruffle round the neck, made of antique lace, but soiled and tattered. Another class, and one could see at once that they were Orientals, (if only from the stately walk and easy-flowing folds of the white sheet, which it was evident they were accustomed to, and knew how to dispose to advantage,) had less vivacity than the others, but the elements of more perfect beauty in their features. The oval face, fine nose, and almond-shaped eyes, arched eyebrows, and small mouth, would have been very lovely had there been a look of health and intelligence to light up the whole. The cheeks lacked the tinge of health, and one could see from the fine eyes that there had once been an active mind within, but that it had been overclouded by the petty cares of life, and suffered to languish for want of cultivation.

I felt very sad. Were these depressed, ignorant women the representatives of the Deborahs and Esthers?

Was this the remnant of the mighty nation whose

skill had raised the wonderful stones we had been looking at, only the evening before, in the temple wall?

Where were the warriors and the heroes? Alas! alas! could there be a Joshua or a Judas Maccabæus in disguise among these poor creatures of the timid glance, shrinking frightened before the Arab peasant who came along with a donkey load of water for sale, and asking him its price with bated breath and almost servile aspect?

It were easier to imagine that a David existed among the handsome lads with ruddy cheek and bright eye, whose courage and spirit had not yet been damped by cruel wrong or bitter experience of the oppressor's yoke; or that among the study worn faces, with flashing eyes, there could yet be found a St Paul or an Isaiah, in whom apostolic fervour might give the weak body strength or prophetic inspiration, overcome the feeble utterance, and loosen the tongue for grand outbursts of poetry or eloquence.

We had lingered and must now hasten on, and soon found ourselves among some rather better streets, more airy and cleaner. Here we met several of the Oriental rabbis. Their dress might not be new—indeed, it was easy to see that it was old—but it was well chosen, full trousers of crimson cloth, a vest of light Damascus silk, and a cloth robe, with ample gray turban, most carefully folded. There was pride in their quick eye and aquiline nose, hauteur and contempt in the carriage of their head and in their gait.

"Well," said Walter, "I have seen many faces to-

day that I never can forget; but no Naomi so far. That darling little boy—what an exquisite little Samuel he would make—looking up so innocently in his mother's face! Perhaps some day I may try that. Hannah delivering her darling to the old high priest, and the old man I sketched would do for Eli; but Hannah! I saw no face of sufficient tenderness and pathos for hers; nor indeed one, excepting the young girl's, with a happy expression."

"It is not to be expected, brother, that we should find the best specimens in this way; by and by, when we get acquaintances among the families, I daresay you will see some handsomer, and happier looking too."

We had reached the hospital of the Jewish Mission, and found Dr Baron there. He was very courteous, and showed us the whole of the establishment. I had been half amused at the absurdity of looking among an hospital of sick people for a subject for a picture, but found that was a mistake.

There were several persons waiting in the spacious entrance court, very respectable looking, and some very handsome also. "These are chiefly Spanish Jewesses," observed the Doctor; "some of them are of good families. They are desirous of visiting a relation who is in one of the wards above; but I have made it a rule only to allow visitors on the Saturday, which is their Sabbath." So saying he led the way across the court to a large room on the ground floor, where were twelve or fourteen patients. After having seen the narrow dirty streets of the Jewish quarter, it was de-

lightful to find these poor people in clean comfortable beds in a large airy room. "This is the men's ward. We have named the different rooms after the patriarch's Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And the women's wards up-stairs are named after Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah."

A broad flight of steps led to the terrace above, round which were the women's wards, each with the name in large Hebrew characters over the door. Everything was beautifully neat and clean. The principal room was long, and had at its farther end a double window, commanding a very fine view of the Mount of Olives. There were none but sick people in this room. I went up again to look at the view from the window. "I hope, Miss Russell, if you are fond of drawing that you will come another day and take that view; it is worthy the trouble." This was just what I wished.

In the other rooms, which were smaller, we found German and Polish Jewesses; but still no model for Naomi. We then went down-stairs and saw the kitchen, and Dr Baron informed us that the Jews have religious scruples which prevent them from eating of our food, and it was therefore necessary to buy meat from the Jewish butcher, and have Jewish cooks; "for," said he, "if we are to do them any good at all, we must avoid doing violence to their feelings, and but for this attention in providing food which they can eat, we should not have any patients."

CHAPTER XVII.

VISIT TO JEWISH FAMILIES.

"OUR first visit," said Mr Andersen, "shall be to the house of one of the few wealthy families of Jerusalem. The father is lately dead. He had been a native of Gibraltar, and, as such, a British subject. They are extremely proud of this; and, indeed, in an Oriental country, British protection is worth having. There are many annoyances to which Europeans would be exposed, if the Turks did not know that there is a consul to whom complaint could be made, and who would get redress sooner or later."

"I don't exactly understand," said Walter, "what are the benefits of having a consul. Of course, if any one robbed or beat me, I should go to him for assistance."

"The first great advantage is, that no Turkish official can, as such, enter the house of a British subject. If anything is wanted, the consul is applied to, and he sends his kawasses."

"You would not like, Miss Russell," said Mary, who was of the party, "to have Turkish soldiers or police wander in and out of your house on any pretext they might fancy."

"No, certainly, after what I have seen of Turkish soldiers. Pray, what are kawasses? I have seen them, and know in general that they are men who wear a belt

full of pistols, and carry long silver-headed staves, shod with iron, with which they strike the ground in a very important manner as they march before their master. But what use are they?"

"They are a sort of police, under the exclusive orders of the consul, and in his pay. Kawass means literally one who shoots, for they are entitled to carry arms. As Turkish authorities are not allowed to arrest a British subject, it is necessary for the consul to have some one to do so. And in case of a disturbance, it may be very necessary to have this kind of half soldiers in his own pay. Supposing a British subject breaks the peace, or commits a robbery, the Turkish police must either send for the English kawass, or, if there be not time for this, themselves bring him to the consul, for they are not allowed to put him in prison. But here we are at the house of the widow Tarragon."

A servant conducted us into an upper room, which I at once recognised as the room in the frontispiece of "Bartlett's Walks." The lady of the house came forward, and greeted us with much cordiality. She was small, slight, and very fair in complexion, and did not look more than forty. Her dress was rich: a sky-blue jacket, and white silk skirt embroidered with silver, just below which peeped full trousers of pale yellow silk, and little green morocco slippers. The head-dress was a turban, projecting forwards in a half-moon shape, and down the back hung a white muslin veil spangled with gold.

Two pretty daughters, dressed in the same manner



SPANISH JEWESSES, WEARING THE MOON-SHAPED TURBAN.

as their mother, stood ready to make their salaam, as soon as she had done greeting her guests. They led us to the divan, and then repeated the salaams. Mr Andersen spoke with them in Spanish, and Mary in Arabic.

Meanwhile I observed the gold necklaces and bracelets which the ladies wore. The necklaces were a sort of fringe, composed of separate little pointed ornaments of gold, something like sharks' teeth. The bracelets were much handsomer, and composed of a multitude of beautifully-wrought flexible chains. The long clasps were thickly set with diamonds.

Small chains of gold and festoons of pearls were attached to the turban, and one wore a large emerald depending on her forehead.

The mother had a variety of diamond ornaments set on her turban, and they all wore fresh flowers intermingled with the jewellery. Two pretty little boys sat shyly at the lower end of the divan. Their red caps were ornamented with gold coins; but, like all other children that we had seen, they were spoiled in appearance by the old-fashioned, clumsy look of their clothes; jackets and full trousers, such as men wore, sat awkwardly upon these little fellows, and their gait, when called upon to pay their respects to Mr Andersen, was a perfect waddle. They were not so bad, however, as the youngest—evidently his mother's pet—who was carried in his nurse's arms. A fat, rosy, little creature, all blazing in scarlet and gold, and his fat hands full of sweetmeats. He kicked and cried, and would not be

noticed, to his mother's annoyance, and had to be sent away again. Lemonade, delicious preserved citron, and coffee were served, between the intervals of which a ceremonious conversation was carried on. The widow Tarragon was a very stately person. Hauteur and a little sharpness betrayed themselves in her manners and speech. But this was unintentional, for nothing could be more cordial than the welcome she gave to her friends.

The daughters sat perfectly silent, unless addressed by Mary. Their large black eyes were vivacious in expression. The eyelids had been newly painted with kohl, and the eyebrows prolonged with the same, so as to meet; and their pretty little hands were stained with henna. But they had little or nothing to say. I asked Mary if they could read.

They looked inquiringly, and she repeated my question to them. "Oh no, we are never taught; it would be too hard for us."

"And how do you spend your time?"

"We make point, or sweetmeats, or visit our friends."

One of them showed me the point. It was a pretty fancy edge, worked in silk round the border of her veil, and of her crape chemise. Her sister then fetched a white sheet (or veil) worked all round in the same way, but of different pattern.

Conversation flagged, and we took leave, amid many entreaties to come often; for in so unvaried a life a visit was a great event.

Walter was disappointed at the want of expression in such undeniably handsome faces. Their features were perfect: beautiful nose, soft lips, brilliant eyes, fine complexion, but an emptiness of expression which was vexatious.

"For want of education, Mr Russell. Their minds fall asleep, and die for want of being roused. Give those girls a European education, and then see what their faces will become. But, alas! the Oriental Jews have a prejudice against instructing women, especially in religious matters. They consider that as their minds are weak, they might turn knowledge to a bad account. Some two or three of the Polish Jewesses can read the prayers, without understanding them."

"Why, Miss Russell, scarcely any of them know how to sew, much less read. The Spanish Jewesses are perfectly ignorant. The German and Polish can knit and sew a *little*."

"Does not your mission teach them?"

"They are very inaccessible. We have no means of getting at them. They do not want to learn, and are far more superstitious than the men."

"By the by," said Mary, "our friend Rachel is getting on nicely. She has made great progress during her father's absence. She can read German already, and wishes to begin English."

"Then let me be her English teacher. I should like to improve my German; and, besides, I wish to see more of her, but our house-taking has hitherto engrossed me so much."

"She will be delighted. I will bring her to see you."

"Can you tell me," asked Walter of Mr Andersen, "why all the Jews, and those little boys also, wear curls down the sides of their face? It gives some of the young men an almost feminine look."

"Those curls are called 'peyahs,' and they wear them in obedience to the verse, 'Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither mar the corners of thy beard,'" (Lev. xix. 27.)

"But surely that is not the meaning of the verse?"

"I think not. This is an instance of rabbinical addition to a simple command. The cutting of the corners of the beard was doubtless a heathen practice, and therefore simply forbidden; and the rabbis, on account of this, have insisted on all Jews letting the locks on each side of the temple grow into curls."

I observed that the widow Tarragon wore no hair, at least none was visible; but her daughters had fine black tresses.

"When a Jewess is married, her long hair is cut off,* after which she never wears any, or at least puts it carefully out of sight under the turban," said Mary; "this is the way we know a married from an unmarried woman."

"Those girls would have been married long ago, only their mother is too proud to allow them to intermarry with any but a very high family."

As we talked, we had been threading our way once

* This is correct of the Polish Jewesses; Spanish Jewesses put their hair up out of sight.

more down the lanes which lead into the Jewish quarter, and now stopped at one of the doors in the blank wall of the street. It was opened by a little boy of about eight, with fine eyes, and a wistful look about him, that was very engaging.

On recognising Mr Andersen he ran back and brought a tall rabbi, whose manners well agreed with his dignified robes and rabbi's turban. He conducted us into a rather small room, in which a numerous family was assembled.

There was the old patriarch of them all, exceedingly like his son. He was a venerable and striking figure, leaning on his staff to welcome us, or reposing among his cushions.

After we were all seated on the low divan, he dispensed salutations to us each in turn. Mr Andersen told us that he is proud of being the representative of the oldest Spanish (or as they call it, Sephardi) family in Jerusalem, whose genealogies they possess from the time of the exile from Spain. Pride was marked in every one of his finely cut features—the curling lip, dilated nostril, the deep-set fiery eye—in the courteous, yet haughty way of speaking—in the manner with which he received the pipe from his son's hands.

Equally remarkable was the reverence with which this grown-up son received his father's permission to sit down beside him.

The old man, whose eye was not dimmed, nor a hair of his jet black beard become gray, told us that his ancestors in unbroken descent had been chief rabbis

of Jerusalem. In translating this, Mr Andersen explained the poetic phrase used as title of chief rabbi in Hebrew, "First in Zion;" and that this office is always given to a Spanish Jew, as being a native and subject of the Sultan.

Our host added that his family possesses an ancient firman, exempting them as a family from all taxes, and empowering them to wear green clothes and a white turban, and, if they will, to purchase slaves.

I had been so struck with this grand old man, as to be almost unmindful of the family grouped around him. There was the mother, with equal pride in her manners. She wore no ornaments but a gold necklace. Her features were still fine in outline, and her eye undimmed with age. She exacted and received scarce less reverence from her sons and daughters than the old patriarch; but a chubby little grandson (disfigured as far as possible by his little suit of old man's clothes) seemed privileged to give his grandmother as much trouble as he pleased. He was obstreperous enough to annoy his mother, but would on no account be coaxed away from the old lady, whose pockets seemed to contain a store of sweetmeats for his especial delight.

The little boy who had opened the door for us, and an elder brother, stood gravely listening to their father's conversation, their hands respectfully folded under the tips of their hanging sleeves. The elder one seemed rather proud of an inkhorn stuck in his girdle. A little granddaughter sat at the feet of the old rabbi.

The pretty creature had her dainty oval or almond-

shaped eyelids marked all round with kohl. A little green jacket, embroidered with gold, set off her rosy tint. She was very quiet, and sat looking at her grandfather with a gravity which could scarce be found in a European child of six.

Mary was sitting near enough to pop a sugar-plum into her lap. She showed no surprise, but very seriously made the sweetest little salaam with her tiny, henna-stained fingers.

There was a concourse of servants in Oriental fashion in the same room, but on a slightly lower level, taking an interest in all the actions and conversation of the strangers. They appeared, and in fact were, poorer members of the same family. Sweetmeats, lemonade, home-made wine, coffee, and pipes were served, not by the domestics, but were taken from them by the wife and sister of the younger rabbi, and by them presented to us, and to their father, husband, and mother. The wife had a very sweet expression in her face. It was oval, the features delicately formed, and her olive complexion in harmony with the soft half-melancholy eyes. She needed, and had, no kohl to heighten the effect of long drooping eyelashes and finely drawn eyebrows.

Her gentle manners were as interesting as her general appearance. After a sufficient time had been allowed for the smoking of the pipes, Rabbi Joseph (for that was the old man's name) conducted Mr Andersen into his library, of which he was, if possible, still more proud than of his high birth.

There were a great many books, all Hebrew, of

course, mostly MSS., but some printed. While Mr Andersen was examining these, Walter seized the opportunity to get a sketch of the old man's head and face. Mary had not been able to converse with the ladies because they understood no Arabic, only Spanish; so we also came into the library, leaving them in the other room.

The two little boys, however, came with us to look at the books. I asked Mary if they could read. She translated my inquiry to Rabbi Raphael, the eldest son, (who spoke Arabic,) and he, smiling at the question, repeated it to his little brothers. They answered almost with scorn. Mr Andersen overheard them, and putting a book into the hand of the youngest, desired him to read. He did so with an eagerness that was almost painful—on, and on—until stopped by Mr Andersen.

Mary asked if that was the Bible.

"Oh no," said their brother, "they have got beyond that; they are now beginning to study the Talmud. The Bible is only for little boys."

Mr Andersen quietly remarked to us, "You see how it is. They consider the subtleties of the Talmud a nobler study than the Word of God."

I had observed at the beginning of our visit that Mr Andersen had addressed the old rabbi in Hebrew, but he disdained to converse with a Gentile in the holy tongue, and persisted in replying in Spanish, until Mr Andersen gave up the attempt. Father and son, however, conversed in Hebrew with as much ease as in Spanish. Mr Andersen afterwards told me that most

of the Jews make no difficulty in speaking Hebrew with him, but this old man's pride would not allow him to do so. We took leave, Walter resolving to accept the invitation to come again, for he was eager to get more opportunities for seizing at least the outline of those noble countenances.

The eldest son accompanied us to show us the Spanish synagogues, one of which had been rebuilt by his family.

"There was much more intelligence in the faces of those Jewesses than in the other family that we visited, and an aristocratic cast of features that the others had not," said Walter; "I was much struck with the fineness of the features and the delicate little hands."

"In fact," said Mr Andersen, "the first family had all the conscious pride of wealth; but they are considered nobodies by these people, whose pride is of a very different kind—namely, that of birth."

"Do they all live in that little house?" I asked.

"Oh yes," said Mary, "and almost all in that little room."

"How very unwholesome! but they go out sometimes into the fresh air?"

"No, indeed, excepting to synagogue. I dare say those ladies have never in their lives been outside the Jaffa Gate."

"And how do they live?" exclaimed Walter; "they look delicate, but not positively unhealthy."

"I don't know. It is wonderful."

"Probably something is owing to their careful diet;

but it is true that when illness comes, the poor things soon sink under it. They cannot bear up as we do."

The synagogues are all in one group—doors opening from each into each.

"They are miserable buildings compared with those I have seen in England and Italy," observed Walter; and they certainly were very simple in their furniture. The reading desk (made large enough to contain several persons) and other fittings are made of painted wood, ornamented in a grotesque manner.

"There, Mr Russell, is fine art for you!" exclaimed Mary, pointing out Oriental pictures of paltry landscapes, gaudy flowers and ships, &c., without human figures, yet in rather better style than any Turkish painting we had seen elsewhere. Our guide, the rabbi, appeared to be very proud of the performance. He showed us the recess or temple where a crimson velvet curtain, rather faded, on which Hebrew inscriptions were embroidered in gold, concealed the precious rolls of the law. He showed us one. It was written in fine bold characters on parchment, and formed a double roll around two strong sticks, the tops of which were ornamented with silver bells and crowns, and there was also a silver hand to be used as pointer by the person officiating, for fear of omissions or mistakes. When not used, the roll was kept in a velvet case, ornamented with massive bullion fringe. There were several copies of the law similarly decorated.

It is considered a great merit to accomplish the writing out of such a manuscript, and Rabbi Raphael

told us that the skins of which the parchment is made were very carefully prepared, and, of course, only of clean (*i.e.*, pure) beasts.

The synagogues were being used as schools for children of all ages—some very infantine—some up in the galleries, and others below. There were also here and there old men absorbed in their studies—some with huge spectacles. One young man, very pale and exhausted-looking, had a handkerchief tightly bound round his head. Walter asked the reason. It was to quiet the pain in his forehead, caused by constant reading. He had undertaken to perform instead of another the meritorious action of reading through the Bible in ten days and nights, and had got rather more than half-way through. For this he was paid a trifling sum by the person whose soul was to be benefited by the merit of this action.

"The idea of sacrifice and vicarious suffering pervades their whole system," remarked Mr Andersen; "however they may try to evade it, and deny that the death of the Messiah for an atonement is necessary. It is remarkable how constantly the idea of suffering by means of a substitute, or gaining merit in the same manner, occurs in their observances."

"Do they offer no actual sacrifices now?"

"Certainly not, because they are excluded from the only place where sacrifices are allowed to be offered—the Temple. The nearest approach to sacrifice is the killing by each person of a white cock on the day of Atonement, accompanied by prayer that the blood of

this victim may be accepted instead of the life of the person; and this is done on account of a singular coincidence between the name in Hebrew of both man and cock, which are expressed by the same word."

"Supposing that the Temple grounds were now suddenly to be thrown open to them, would the Jews restore the sacrifices?"

"Most likely; but they would first require to purify the whole enclosure with the ashes of a red heifer, according to Numbers xix., on account of the pollution occasioned by the dead who have been slain there."

"But there are no priests."

"The Jews believe that the line of priests has not been lost, and that every person bearing the name of Cohen is of the line of Aaron,—as also, that every one bearing the name of Levi is of that tribe,—and they act upon this. In the reading of the law in the synagogue, the portion is divided and read by various persons of different degrees, who are called up each in their order by the reader, and the person first summoned must be a Cohen, and the second a Levi. A Cohen also is always obliged, in case of death, to leave the house in obedience to the command of God, (Lev. xxi. 1–5.) And a first-born son is always considered the property of the Cohen, and bought back—redeemed from him by the parents, (Exod. xxxiv. 20.) These are circumstances of daily occurrence."

"Would it not be easy," asked Walter, "for a person to assume the name of Cohen who has no right to it?"

"I have asked that very question of the Jews, and

they say no. That, in the first place, there is no sufficient inducement in the way of privilege or advantage to be gained; and in the next, that the Jews know each other's families and descent so well, that detection would be almost certain. I find that the distinction between the families of Cohen, Levi, and the other Jews, is kept up among all the great divisions, that is, the Sephardim or Spanish, the Askenazim or Polish, and the Morocco or Mograbee, as well as the Persian or Indian Jews."

"Are these classes very distinctly marked?"

"Very. By language, customs, and descent. The Sephardim look upon themselves as belonging to the royal tribe of Judah, who took refuge in Spain, and some in Italy, at the dispersion, and who returned here in large numbers when Ferdinand and Isabella exiled them from Spain. They utterly despise the Askenazim —above all, they despise their corrupt accent in reading. The Spanish is certainly the most musical and pure. All the men speak, read, and write Hebrew— but the women, being uneducated, cannot speak it; therefore they have, besides, a family language used at home. Among the Sephardim this is Spanish; among the Askenazim, very corrupt German; among the Mograbees, African-Arabic. The common language is Hebrew, and it is used for religious purposes, as well as literature and ordinary intercourse of letter-writing, conversation, &c., &c., so that in the family language, all principal words are still Hebrew, though the rest may be Spanish, German, or Arabic."

"Then Hebrew ought not to be called a dead language?"

"By no means. It is never called a dead language here. All receipts, leases of houses, marriage contracts, &c., &c., are made out in Hebrew; and it is spoken all day long in the Jewish quarter."

"One more question. Are there any Jews in Palestine whose families may have lived here uninterruptedly since the days of our Lord?"

"In Jerusalem, of course not; but possibly in Hebron, and in the north, especially in Tiberias, there is every probability that they were allowed to remain. The Jews believe that there have always been some of their people in Tiberias and Galilee."

That evening Walter and I had much to talk about. The day had been a most interesting one, and we had seen, in the habitations on Mount Zion, the remnant of that people to whom God had said, "Ye are my witnesses;" and surely they are fulfilling this their office, though it may be involuntarily, or even against their will in some respects.

They are, by their very existence and condition here, bearing the most powerful testimony to the truth of the Holy Scriptures. Strangers in their own home, and the city of their fathers, no scion of the royal house of Judah wields the sceptre of David and Solomon in Zion; no son of Aaron consecrates the lamb for burnt-offering, or sprinkles the blood of atonement and forgiveness on Mount Moriah: and yet the children of Abraham still claim to be the chosen people.

And no particle of the laws delivered by Moses has been lost—no tittle effaced from the sacred rolls, in which are preserved alike the denunciations of the prophets, and the glorious promises to which the down-trodden nation still clings with unquenchable faith. Witnesses they are to the grand truths—that "the Lord is one God;" that "His word abideth for ever;" that "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." What a wonderful day it will be when noble intellectual sons of Israel, like those we have seen this afternoon, shall become willing witnesses that Jesus is the Son of David! Surely they will carry all before them, as the apostles once did, and will constrain the nations to believe in their Messiah as the Redeemer of the world.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE STOLEN SPOONS.

SOME days passed away, and still Walter had found no original for his Naomi.

We were at breakfast, arranging the plans for the day. Should we go again into the Jewish quarter and make another search?

"I cannot take up any more of Mr Andersen's valuable time, Emily; and yet to walk by myself into the houses won't do. But I cannot begin work in earnest until I have found her."

"Perhaps you will not find her before you have got your canvas and other things from England. After all, there is not much time lost, for you have still a good deal of sketching to do."

"Yes, but I should work so much better if that were off my mind. I am afraid to do too much in arranging the rest until I have that part settled. The whole character of the picture will depend on Naomi."

"Tell me what you want her to be. I may happen to see some one who would do; but then I must know what you require. She must be tall, dignified, and not very young?"

"Above middle age, but not old—a person of energy enough to make her take so long a journey. But remember it was the journey home to her kindred. She felt old age coming upon her, and wished to be among the people of Israel."

"She must have been a brave and courageous woman, to be willing to leave her adopted country at her time of life for a lonely journey, even though it was to her old home."

"She was a firm and decided character."

"I think, Walter, I know what you want. I feel exactly what I should wish for if I were able to paint such a picture. One who has been beautiful, but whose beauty is dimmed by sorrow; of an affectionate disposition, such as won the hearts of her two daughters-in-law; and yet not an insignificant person, but one who would make herself respected as well as loved. Oh, I hope you may be able to find her."

"We *must* find her, if I am really to succeed in my picture."

"And you will succeed. I like your sketches for it so much. I am sure you will succeed."

"I am not so sure as I was at first, now that I have actually begun. My imaginary picture has become fainter in outline and paler in tint since I commenced work, and I am more afraid of incongruities. Perhaps, when I have found Naomi, I shall get on better."

Here Helaneh, the maid, and Constantine came into the room, full of some very important news. The maid talked away, pointing to the next house, and taking up one of the teaspoons from the table.

I gradually, by the help of my small store of Arabic and of her signs, comprehended that she had discovered something about our missing spoons. She made me come up-stairs to the top of the house, and there, on the terrace, stood a chair beside the parapet wall. Mounting from this to a projecting bit of stone, I was able to see down into the house of our neighbours. Just as I peeped over, Helaneh, who had contrived to climb up beside me, pointed to a black woman crossing the court.

Helaneh then jumped down, and pulling me down also, explained by words and signs that she had been looking over that wall while we were at breakfast, and had seen this very slave with two of our spoons in her hand. She then pointed out, what had been unobserved by me, that the domed roof at the top of the next house was close to one corner of our terrace, and it

would not be very difficult for a person to get on to the dome from the terrace adjoining, and let himself down on to my terrace. The black woman was stout and strong enough for such a feat.

What was to be done? Helaneh would only speak in whispers, for fear of being overheard. I suggested that Constantine should climb over and go down and take the spoons, if they really were ours. We went down to speak about this, but he recoiled at the very thought. "It is a hareem, and they are Moslems; they would kill me!"

I had forgotten all about the sanctity of Moslem hareems. Of course that would not do.

"Then you get over, Helaneh. You saw the spoons, and you know the woman."

"I am afraid. They will beat me." A thought seemed to strike her; she went off to the kitchen, put on her white sheet in all haste, and went out.

While my brother and I were discussing the strange discovery, and considering what could be done, Mary came in to fetch me to go with her and sketch the view from the hospital window.

"It seems to me," said Walter, "that here is a case for the Consul; but I feel very much inclined to cut it short, and go in and take the spoons."

"Oh, pray don't, Mr Russell. You would have the whole city in an uproar. Go into a hareem! and that a Moslem hareem! They would kill you, and perhaps all of us. They certainly would not wait to ask who had begun the affair."

"And are we to lose our spoons?"

"I hope not. You must send to the Consul, and he will send to the Pasha."

"And what will the Pasha do? I have seen no police here."

"Oh, there is a sort of police," said Mary, laughing, "though I don't wonder at your not recognising them. They are a ragged set."

"But seriously," said I, "what will the Pasha do? Will he search the house?"

"Oh, dear, no! He won't meddle with a hareem. I don't think he could do so. It would cause a revolution. That is an effendi's family next door."

"Then what will he do?"

"I suppose, when he is told that the spoons have been seen there, that he will send for the owner of the house and ask him why some of his hareem have got the English lady's spoons, and advise him to give them back. If the effendi denies all about it, bring forward the witnesses who saw the spoons there."

"Yes, true! Helaneh saw them."

"Did no one but Helaneh see them? Then I am afraid you will lose your spoons indeed; for she is but one, and Moslem law requires two witnesses. And then she is a Christian. I suppose they won't take her evidence at all, even if they really are your spoons. They don't receive any but Moslem evidence. All the effendi has to do will be to bring forward two witnesses to swear that the only spoons he has in his house are his own, and he may even produce a spoon

in proof. And the Pasha would not search the house; at least not until the hareem have been shut up in a room, and of course they could hide anything they like about themselves; but it would be against the honour of an effendi to search his house. Who ever heard of such a thing?"

"Then we must be content with our loss, though we feel sure our spoons are at this moment next door."

"And yet," said Mary, "the Consul ought to be told; if you pass it by so, they may grow bold, and do worse. But no, a thought strikes me: suppose you say nothing for a little while, and be on the watch, you may have another opportunity of seeing some of the spoons. They appear to have them in use. And if you do, then call yourself, Mr Russell, on the effendi, and say that your respect for his honour prevents your making a fuss, and that you know it was only the foolish slave's fault, and beg him to make her give them back. I think he may listen. Those people are very proud, and if you go to himself"——

At this moment in rushed Helaneh, accompanied by another woman, who had our six spoons all safe and sound in her hand. Helaneh was clapping her hands and dancing like a mad woman, and Constantine grinning with delight, and all three talking together.

"This is Miss Grave's Bethlehem woman Miriam," said Mary.

She was a fine tall woman, in the blue peasant garb, smiling away, and keeping her veil just drawn before her mouth. (Mary told us, in sign of respect.)

And now we got the particulars of the story from Constantine, who affected some gravity as being a man, and checked the women (either of them old enough to be his mother) as if they had been children, when they broke out and interrupted him.

These were our very spoons, with our initials upon them, and recovered from the next house. Helaneh's quick wit had improved upon my suggestion that she could climb over the wall and take the spoons. She herself, a mere townswoman, was afraid to do this; but she fetched an ally in her Bethlehem friend, who was muscular and strong, as the fellahât (peasant women) usually are. And Miriam had actually gone into the house, not over the wall, but by the door, as, being a woman, she could easily do, and made her way straight to the room door pointed out from above by Helaneh. No one was in it, but there lay the six spoons on the divan; she snatched them up, and was leaving the room just as the black slave came to the door. She guessed what had happened, and first tried to stop Miriam; but though strong, she was not strong enough for that. Then she rushed to the street door and shut it, but Miriam darted up-stairs, gained the roof, (before the other had time to remember that this was the very way which she herself had come to steal the spoons,) jumped over, and brought the spoons in triumph to Helaneh, who was watching the whole affair over the wall. The negress gave chase, but it was too late. In her haste Miriam had lost her shoes, and Constantine added, "Her shoes (be it far from you) fell off from

her in running; and now let the lady do as seems good in her sight."

"Well done, Miriam," cried Walter. "She shall have two pairs of shoes. Why, she has done what the Pasha could not have done."

Miriam was made happy by the price of two pairs of shoes, and Helaneh by a new handkerchief for her head. Constantine stood looking wistfully on, so we gave him the price of a blue silk tassel for his red tarboosh; the said article being quite new, but only graced as yet with a little bunch of blue floss by way of tassel. I was surprised to find that a tarboosh, with its proper heavy fringed tassel of dark blue silk, costs more than ten shillings, sometimes fifteen or eighteen if it is of a very rich dark red. The tassel is bought by weight; and the larger and fuller, the heavier, and, of course, the more admired.

CHAPTER XIX.

SEARCH FOR A NAOMI CONTINUED.

"Now, Mary, you must explain to me why he said, 'Be it far from you,' when he mentioned the shoes."

"Oh, that is good breeding. Natives never mention shoes without adding, 'ba'eed minak;' the same after a dog, and, I am sorry to say, also after mentioning a Jew,—that is the way the natives, and especially the

Greek Christians, always speak of the Jews. All the Greeks hate the Jews. They say that they use blood in their Passover cakes."

"That explains why Helaneh won't eat the bread which your Jewish baker brings us. Indeed, she won't touch it, but holds the plate out at arm's length to the man, and when he has put the loaf on it, she carries it stretched out as far from her as she possibly can."

"Of course. Um Hanna used to do so too, at first; but she has been with us so long, that she is beginning to lose some of these superstitions. At first we were near losing her, because so many Jews came to our house to see papa. She said it would bring her bad luck; and still she always crosses herself when she sees one. But the servant of Mr Johnson was funnier still, for he said one day, 'I see now why you like the Jews so much. It is because you never pray to the holy Virgin or to the blessed saints.' But the sun will be too much on our view if we don't make haste. It does not do to take a sketch in Jerusalem when the domes are all one blaze of light. There is no outline, and they become confused in the strong sunshine."

We went to the hospital, and had nearly finished our sketch, when there was a slight commotion in the lower court of the hospital. A poor man was brought in suffering from a terrible fall from the roof of the Armenian Convent, where he had been employed in putting panes into a window above one of the domes. He turned out to be our old acquaintance the Salonica

Jew, whom we had also employed as glazier. His wife was with him in great alarm and anxiety. He did not recover. All that could be done for him was done; but the injury he had sustained was too great, and the next time we went to finish our sketch, we found he had died.

The house-steward, an amiable man, who, though a Christian Jew, seemed to have by his kindness won back the confidence of his brethren, told us that the poor widow was in great distress, and that it would be a charity to give her employment.

"Would she come to our house for work?"

"No Jewess will go among Christians if she can help it; but I am sure she would be thankful to be employed. She is very destitute. I will myself bring her to you if you will allow me. She knows me, and will be less afraid."

In a few days, Mr Nathaniel brought the poor woman. I was much struck by her appearance, which, in the hurry of the accident the other day, I had not observed. "Here is a Naomi," thought I. She was tall, and, poor thing, very dignified in her sorrow, as she stood holding a dear little grandchild in her arms. There was a mild gentleness in her expression, which softened down what would otherwise have been a commanding aspect. When young she must have been very striking-looking, and still the traces of her former beauty remained in her fine eyes and aquiline nose, as well as in her fair bright complexion. Some deep furrows left by grief, rather heightened the effect;

and I at once felt she was the very ideal we had been in search of for Walter's picture.

But it would never have done to talk to her about sitting for her picture. She would have been frightened away from the house for ever. So I merely engaged her to come once a week for some household work, or rather, to speak plainly, some washing, and left the picture to be taken care of by and by. She was to enter upon her duties next day, so I kept my secret, and did not tell Walter anything about my treasure-trove.

Early next morning we were coming in from our walk, through the Jaffa Gate, when a procession of Moslem women met and passed us. There were about forty in number, of course all in white sheets, with yellow boots, singing a pretty canticle, varied by a chorus.

This party was followed by others,—troops of women of all ages, some carrying infants and accompanied by their slaves. They were all singing in the same way. One would recite a stanza in a high pitch of voice, and the rest joined in the chorus, which was always wound up by a shrill trilling note—El-el-el-el-el-el-u-u-u-u-u-u.

At length we discovered that all this was in honour of the wife of an effendi going on a pilgrimage to Mecca—none other than our landlord and his wife. The women of the city took this method of bidding farewell, going out to meet her, and see her depart from under a tree across the valley. At a distance, we saw his male friends escorting the effendi himself

down the steep slope of Zion, from the gate on that side, which they call the Neby Daoud Gate, because it is close to the Tomb of David. It was a very pretty sight,—prancing horses, gay colours, green silk banners, and the music of cymbals and drums.

The lady was to ride on a camel's back, in a kind of chair or pannier, decorated with red silk curtains and streamers. But they were not going by the old-fashioned toilsome way through the desert, south-east of Hebron, but viâ Jaffa to Egypt, and from Egypt by steamer to Jeddah.

Even the pilgrimage of the faithful to Mecca has been affected by modern improvements in the art of travelling, and these Arabs are not unwilling to profit by the results of English wandering habits. They have a story that the English have entered into a compact with the devil, who is to furnish them with as much gold as they desire, whenever they write on little bits of paper, on condition of their never ceasing to travel about from one place to another. However, they do not object to profit by the gold which the English traveller scatters abroad.

Here we had Arabs about to take advantage of the modern improvements and comforts which Frank enterprise has brought even to the very shores of Arabistân.

CHAPTER XX.

ANCIENT CITY WALLS.

RACHEL had begun her English lessons with me. I found her a very intelligent pupil, quick of understanding, and hungry for knowledge.

She was afraid to come to our Moslem end of the town alone, and had no one to accompany her; so it was arranged that I should meet her twice a week at Mr Andersen's, which gave me an opportunity for getting help in Arabic from Mary.

One bright morning—all the mornings were bright, a cloud never was seen; but this morning seemed unusually brilliant, and the English mignionette, in a little stone box at the door of Mrs Andersen's sitting-room, seemed doubly fragrant under the clear heat of the sun; and the shade of the well-blinded room was delightfully refreshing.

Rachel was not there, as usual, waiting for me, with open book and well-conned lesson. "You will not see her to-day at all," said Mary; "her father is come back, and she will not leave him for the next two days at least. Her visit to us is at an end. Her brothers have been found, and are now with their father; he has brought them back with him. Rachel is in ecstasies. You must hear the story, though, for it is a curious one."

"Not now, thank you; as the lesson is not to be, I

must hasten back, for my brother is in want of something to be done for him. We want you and your papa to ride with us this afternoon, for we have found a fine cavern or sepulchre, north of the city, which we don't know, and want you to tell us what it is."

"Then," said Mrs Andersen, "you really must come this evening, Miss Russell, with your brother; we have seen scarcely anything of him yet; and then you can hear the story of the finding of the boys."

"Thank you; if he has no very particular task for to-night, we will come."

Strange to say, the caverns we had discovered were new to our friends as well as to ourselves. They were in the north part of the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which here is almost filled with well-grown olive-trees, and is charmingly rural and retired; left to the gray doves, who seemed to have found perfect safety here.

A cloud of them flew out as we rode up to the entrance of our cavern. It is so large that we rode into it, and very picturesque was the group of horses among the huge fragments of rock which had fallen from the overhanging roof. Two rough natural pillars had been left as supports, and these were festooned with wild flowers; and maiden-hair grew in tufts in the crevices. The whole was of the mellow tint which long exposure gives to the limestone of this country, a subdued orange, the effect of which is very fine, whether in the half-light of projecting portions, or in the deep shade of recesses, or, as in the Castle of David, when the brilliant sun brings out every variety of tint, or

the full moon bathes it in a flood of soft golden light.

It was decided by Mr Andersen and Walter that this cavern had been formed in the course of quarrying. That there had been an ancient stone quarry here could not be doubted. The regularly hewn ledges and angles testified plainly enough, and in many places there were distinct marks of the pickaxe, with which implement most of the work appeared to have been done. These marks were particularly observable in the tombs at the opposite side of the valley, among which Mr Andersen showed us that of Simon the Just, which is an object of reverence to the Jews to this day. They have a particular day on which they visit the tomb and pray.

We continued our ride up the valley. Quarrying and rock-hewn tombs appear everywhere. In some parts there are whole lines of tombs like little streets. At the head of the valley, to the west, are the Tombs of the Judges, which the Jews believe to be the burial-place of the Sanhedrim, or Council of Seventy Judges.

There was still time, after exploring these, for a visit to the Tombs of the Kings, which we had passed among the olive-trees, not far from the Damascus Gate; so we returned by a circuitous road, among pretty sumach plantations. The fresh green bushes looked charmingly pretty among the broken rocky ground. The leaves and young stems of the plant are used in Jerusalem in making a yellow dye for leather; and the seeds, which have an agreeable acid flavour, are pounded and eaten

by the Arabs as a kind of spice to their bread, when they are fasting.

A gazelle started from behind a rock. It was the first we had seen. The pretty creature glanced at us over its shoulder, and bounded swiftly away. I longed to get a nearer view of those lustrous eyes; but it was gone in an instant.

On the north-west verge of the great olive grove we came to the Tombs of the Kings; but not being provided with matches and tapers, we could only look at the exterior, and admire its beautiful façade. We had been discussing the course of the city walls.

"At any rate," observed Walter, as we turned our horses' heads, "this tomb must be a fixed point in the topography of Jerusalem; the walls could not have enclosed this."

"True," said Mr Andersen, "*it must be as old as the period of the third wall*; but I, for one, have suspended my opinion upon many of the vexed questions until we can obtain a few more fixed points from which to argue. This can scarcely be the case until excavations are permitted, for there can be no doubt that old foundations do still exist beneath the soil, which would materially assist our inquiries."

"I have never seen the course of stones to which you alluded just now, as possibly belonging to the first wall."

"Then let us turn aside; it is close by, among the olive-trees on our left."

In two minutes we were standing beside a line of a

few large stones, massive, and having the rabbeted edge peculiar to ancient stones in Jerusalem.

"You perceive that this is not of the oldest and most massive kind of rabbeting; it is more accurately defined, and not so wide. The stones lie in the right direction for a part of Agrippa's wall."

"Have you traced it farther eastwards?"

"There is no very distinct trace; but you remember that Agrippa was obliged to desist and complete his wall in an inferior style from that in which he had commenced it. Let us try and trace it back towards the city on this side."

There certainly were remains of some ancient wall* visible at short intervals from this point along the path which led towards the city. Here an old stone peeped up, there a portion of what seemed to have been the lining of small stones from which the two outer rows of great stones had been taken away. Broken fragments of rabbeted stones were to be found at intervals the whole way up to the north-west corner of the city; and here we found that a portion of ancient wall does pass through the modern one, in a very curious manner, and in a direct line with the remains we had been tracing. But we were neither of us at that time sufficiently learned in Josephus, or in the disputes about the second wall and the Gate Gennath, to estimate the reasons why this might or might not have been the commencement of Agrippa's wall. And Mr Andersen was too cautious

* These remains have since been destroyed during the erection of modern buildings.

a thinker to pronounce a hasty opinion. He still adhered to the idea that excavations would be necessary to decide this and many similar questions. Reading about the walls of Jerusalem in England, with a map before one, is a very different affair, however, from standing before a fragment of colossal masonry, in full view of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and perceiving that the identity of its site with the hallowed scene of our Saviour's resurrection may depend upon the age of these very stones, or upon the direction which other portions of that wall took.

It is astonishing how soon the eye becomes accustomed to the various styles of architecture, sharp to detect the characteristics of different ages, quick to pounce upon the smallest fragment of an older period which may have been worked up into more modern erections.

Living in Jerusalem makes one something of an antiquary, and a few of the most important waymarks soon fixed themselves upon our minds. One, which was well illustrated by this very ride, was the difference in colour where ancient buildings had been, from the colour of the soil which had not been built upon.

Here, along this path, it was impossible to confound the whitish pulverised soil (largely mixed with lime and the dust of decomposed limestone) on our right hand, with the rich red clay, heavy and unadulterated, of the field on our left.

This difference once observed, never afterwards fails to catch the eye, and often serves to mark the site of

an ancient building, where no remains of masonry exist; though, on close examination, minute fragments of mosaic stone and pottery afford ample confirmation.

The differences in the character of the old stones are as easily distinguished when once they have been observed. The very ancient weather-beaten stones, so full of holes that they look worm-eaten, and the square shape of which is barely to be traced, carry one back to the earliest times of all, perhaps even to the times of Canaanitish nations. Next come the Hebrew remains, more massive and bold in style than those of any other age. The marks of the tool are still upon them, but it has been sparingly used, as if in fear of diminishing from their grandeur. There are also the great stones, the costly stones, nearly as large, and wrought so carefully that their marble sides are almost as smooth as if they had been polished.

Next come those with rabbeted edge, like the former; but the rabbeting is narrow, well-marked, and finished, as if done by the chisel. These seem of the Roman age.

Next, (and the Moslem quarter of the city is full of specimens of these,) the much smaller, well-fitting, perfectly squared stones of the Saracenic period. The marks of the saw are plain upon their sides, and suggest a cause for the disappearance of the greater part of the grand old stones. What need was there to quarry afresh, when the materials lay ready among the ruins of the former city? The old stones were sawn asunder, and each one would yield a score such as the more refined taste of the Moslem architect desired.

Different again from these, are the stones of the Crusader. They are larger, probably also sawn, and obtained like them from the ancient stones, but are usually ornamented with a shallow border of make-believe rabbeting, different alike from the simpler style of the Saracens, and from the bolder style of the Romans. Many buildings in the city contain specimens of several of these kinds, besides the Castle of David and the city wall, which latter is a curious patchwork in many places, and bears in indelible characters the record of the succeeding generations who have marred and repaired the mighty work. Here and there one can almost fancy one sees a piece which must have been forced in by a huge battering-ram, so strangely does the patchwork of small and modern stones seem to have been inserted to fill up a breach in the old wall.

One has, at first, a difficulty in believing that the walls of Jerusalem can be so old as they are said to be. They have a freshness, the lines are so sharp, that one feels as if they were but of yesterday; and it is only as one learns to understand aright the deep yellow colour with which three hundred years of wintry storms have tinged the pure white limestone, and to contrast it with the snowy brilliancy of modern structures, that one is able to feel that these walls are a veritable and a fitting monument to the glories of the Moslem Solomon, (Solyman the Magnificent.)

But then the very freshness of these battlements, and perfection of their outline, become an argument in

favour of the extreme antiquity of the earliest remains. If three hundred years have left so faint a trace upon these stones, exposed as they are to the full brunt of the north and west storms, what may we not believe to be the age of those great fragments on the city wall in its sheltered eastern side, especially in the part between the St Stephen's and the Golden Gates? The fine grained marble masses at the south-east corner, or at the Jewish place of wailing, may well have seen the days of David or of Solomon; and the battered, honeycombed relics on the mountain tops, on which the storms of thousands of years have changed the golden hue into a hoary gray, may indeed be remnants of primeval heathen altars and high places.

CHAPTER XXI.

RABBI ABRAHAM'S BOYS STOLEN.

We spent the evening at Mr Andersen's. I was anxious to hear the story of the recovery of his boys. It was given to us in outline by Mr and Mrs Andersén, and then Rabbi Abraham himself came in to consult Mr Andersen about some business, and we had the whole over again from his own lips. I was so struck by it that I took other opportunities of getting every detail from him, and wrote them carefully down.

I saw at once, by the brightness in Walter's eye,

how much he was charmed by Rabbi Abraham himself; and, indeed, there was a simple dignity about him which was perfectly irresistible, when joined with the quick intelligence of his nation, and his own personal gentleness.

He could speak a little English, but Mr Andersen and he soon fell into German, which we both fortunately understood; and most interesting was the recital, poured forth with all the eloquence which deeply-stirred feelings alone can give.

There was not a little shrewdness, too, in his remarks. Now the tear would quiver in his eye, as he told of the agonising suspense; and then gratitude to the kind Englishman who befriended him in his hour of great need, lit up his face, and came warm from his heart, as in few burning words he told of the cruel scorn and hatred of the Jewish race which, but for this timely aid, had occasioned the loss of his darling boys.

From that evening forward Rabbi Abraham and Walter were fast friends. A week rarely passed in which we had not a visit from him; and many an interesting conversation did we have about his past history, and the manners and customs of his nation. We were touched by the sincerity and childlike simplicity with which this man of gray hairs and Hebrew learning set himself to receive and understand all the lesser precepts and practices of Christianity, the profession of whose great doctrines had cost him so dear. Quick of understanding, and of ardent as well as steadfast faith, both Walter and myself found that there

was many a lesson which we might learn with advantage from this Hebrew Christian.

But now for the story of his boys. Rabbi Abraham got to Beyroot faster than he had hoped. The wind was favourable, and he was scarcely more than fifteen hours in making the passage from Jaffa. There were three vessels lying at anchor there—two Greek and one Egyptian. Before landing, he went on board of them, beginning with the Greek, and satisfied himself that his children were not on board of either. He then went on shore, straight to a friend of Mr Andersen's, and got him to station a person at the landing-place to watch; for he had learned that one of the Greek schooners was to sail the next evening, and he felt certain that his children were going to be sent to Russia, and that to watch the vessel was his best chance of recovering his boys.

But how if they were not in Beyroot at all?

Once this thought occurred to Abraham when he was on board the Egyptian vessel—how if they are now in Alexandria? But then something seemed to tell him that they certainly were here in this very town, and he took courage and determined to find them; and, besides, there was more chance of getting a vessel to Odessa at Beyroot than at Alexandria—so that the probability was in favour of their being here.

He went to the Russian Consul-general's house. It was at a distance from the town, but he found it out and got there, hot, dusty, and tired. When there, they told him that for business he must go to the office.

The office was in the town. To go back to the town would take nearly an hour, and he was afraid of missing the Consul. He asked leave to wait, but received the same answer, that the office was the place for business. He went back to the town, and with some difficulty found the Consul's office.

A number of persons were waiting in the entrance court for admittance to the presence of the Consul-general. Kawasses in rich dresses were lounging about: messengers were coming and going. The Consul-general must be a very great man. He was told he must wait. He begged to be allowed to speak to one of the clerks, and received for answer that they were all busy. Tired as he was, and faint for want of food, he still felt nothing but anxiety lest meanwhile his boys should be shipped off in his absence, and he unable to prevent it, perhaps ignorant of it. Presently there was a stir. The kawasses jumped up, and, snatching their sticks, went into the inner part of the house, and returned immediately, ushering in formal procession the Pasha of Beyroot, who had been visiting the Consul-general. The Pasha was followed by his secretaries and dragoman, pipe-bearers, and servants. One of them—a renegade Greek—in passing spit at Abraham, saying in Turkish, "Jew, dog!" and added further abuse in Greek.

He hoped that now he should see the Consul. No; a Greek bishop and his train arrived before there was time for him so much as to ask for admittance. At last he could stand no longer, and sat down on the

lowest step of a flight of stairs. Presently he was roused by a poke from a stick, and one of the kawasses railed at him, "You Jew, may your father be burned! Do you sit down before us? Get up this moment, and be ashamed."

Abraham, recollecting himself, watched an opportunity and slipped a few piastres into the hand of the most good-natured-looking, and then ventured to ask for a little water, which he was given. No sooner had the Greek bishop and his train left, than a Druse chieftain and his followers appeared, and poor Abraham was in deep despair.

It was long past noon, and he had not yet taken a single step towards seeking for his children. While he stood thus in perplexity—whether to go and mount guard himself at the water's edge without the Consul's authority for detaining his children if he should see them, or run the chance of missing them by waiting to see the Consul first—he caught a glimpse of a well-known face at the entrance. It was the very man who had run in and informed against him at the synagogue in Jerusalem. Now he was sure his children were here. This man was a native of Russia—in fact of the town nearest to his own. Doubtless he was come to have his passport signed, and he was going to carry off the children himself. Abraham concealed himself as well as he could among the followers of the Druse sheikh, who at least tolerated him among them, and did not kick or cuff him. But he bethought him of his own passport.

He had entirely forgotten it—left it behind at Jerusalem. Perhaps the Consul would not hear him at all without it. He was also in great fear of the other Jews seeing him, as he would know at once that the father was looking for his children, and would hide them more effectually. But he observed the man making friends at once with the kawasses, and by them placed near a door which seemed to be the one by which common suitors were admitted to the Consul's presence. And so it was. While yet the bustle and crowd of departing Druses lent a momentary concealment to Abraham, that door was opened, and his Jewish acquaintance was admitted, first of a host of applicants for consular justice or aid. He returned in less than ten minutes, an expression of satisfaction and triumph on his face, and passport in hand.

It was so, then; that very passport contained authority to that man to carry out of the country as his own Abraham's darling boys. No time was to be lost. Abraham again entreated the more friendly kawass to obtain him admittance, and this time he did get up and go to the office, and in another minute Abraham was standing before—not the Consul—but the Consul's secretary, who spoke to him sharply, and asked what he wanted. Abraham explained that he was a Russian subject, whose two sons had been taken from him in Jerusalem, and he had reason to believe that they were going to be sent to Russia without his knowledge and consent.

"And what do you want of the Consul-general?"

"If he would be so kind as to assist me in searching for my sons and claiming them."

"Where are your sons?"

"I don't know; but I suppose in the hands of Nathan Wilner, who has just been here to get his passport signed."

"Nathan Wilner? His passport is for himself and his wife and two sons."

"O sir, those are my boys; they are not his."

"How do you know that?"

"He has no sons, sir. I know his family well. He has only one married daughter. Pray, sir, help me; perhaps they are on board already."

"I must have proof that your story is correct. What papers have you?"

"Here, sir," Abraham said, "is a letter from a gentleman that will tell you all;" and he produced Mr Andersen's letter.

"This is English. Have you to do with that English mission?"

"That gentleman is my friend, sir."

"I see; I see. You have sold your religion. Better go back to your old friends. It is of no use being a hypocrite."

"Sir, God knows I have not sold my religion. I believe in Christ with my whole heart."

The young gentleman burst out laughing, and asked, "How much are you paid for saying that?"

"Sir, one of my nation would rather die than sell his religion. Do not laugh at me; but, as you are a

Christian, help me. I shall lose my children; they are my only boys."

"I can't read this English;" and so saying, the secretary left the room, but not before he called a kawass to stand at the door and watch that poor Abraham did not steal anything.

Presently he returned and said—"The Count de Basiloff says this letter is from a very respectable gentleman whom he has seen and knows. But where is your passport?"

"Sir, I have forgotten to bring it."

"Then we can do nothing for you. Take back your letter."

"But my sons"——

"Don't keep me longer. You see many people are waiting. We can do nothing for you." And the kawass at a signal pushed him out of the room.

What was he to do? He went out of the consulate, and sank down on a stone in the street, until the thought struck him that some one might see him there and recognise him, which would be worse; so he crept into a coffee-shop close at hand, and sat down in the furthest corner, for fear of passers-by seeing him. They brought him a cup of coffee and a pipe, and this somewhat refreshed him. He thought he would go again to the friend to whom Mr Andersen had given him a letter, and get him to try and use his influence with the English Consul-general to intercede with his own Consul. This he did, and Mr Brown was very kind, and went at once to the English Consul-general, say-

ing, "I have no doubt he will give me a letter to Count de Basiloff; but I don't know whether it will be of use."

Abraham could not sit still, but as soon as Mr Brown had set off, went by a roundabout way to the water's edge, and stood there as near as he could venture to do, watching for his boys.

When he thought there had been time for Mr Brown to return, he went back to his house. He had seen the English Consul-general and obtained the letter. "I will go with you myself to the Russian office;" and they went.

But alas! the office was closed for the day. No one was there but a kawass, who refused to take the letter until the morning. They went out once more to the Consul-general's country house. He was not at home, and would be out till eleven at night. "There is but one thing more," said Abraham, "I will go and watch the ship again. They shall not take my boys away."

And so he went back to the sea-side, and stood in his old place watching and thinking until the sun went down. Then he recollected that he had left his cloak and little parcel of clothing in the boat which had brought him from Jaffa, and which was to return thither next day; so he went down to the water's edge, and finding the boat where he had left it in the morning, took away his things.

The cloak was very acceptable for a night watch in the open air; and he now remembered that there was

bread at least in his little parcel, the remains of Rachel's provision for his journey. So he untied it, and in doing so, let fall his little Hebrew Testament, out of which tumbled his passport! Rachel had been more thoughtful than he had, and packed up her father's passport in case of being needed. How thankful he was! In about an hour kind Mr Brown came again, bringing with him some supper for Abraham. He was delighted with the finding of the passport, and engaged to come next day and mount guard, while Abraham went to the Consul.

Abraham watched all night, and heard the plashing of the waves, and saw the late moon rise, and the stars set in the west; and day broke, and the fishing-boats put out to sea, and the moonlight mingled with the sunrise, but his boys came not. Those who had the care of them seemed not to be aware that their father was at hand, and had made no attempt to carry them on board during the darkness of the night.

During the night Rabbi Abraham had been walking or sitting close to the water's edge; but now that it was daylight, he went back to his yesterday's post, where some old fishing-boats gave him a hiding-place, as well as shade from the heat of the sun. Mr Brown came at ten o'clock, and then Abraham went off as fast as he could to the Russian consulate. It was not yet open, and he had to stand waiting half an hour before he was admitted; but he was the very first person there on business, and so, as soon as the secretary,

whom he had seen the day before, arrived, he was called in.

"Did I not tell you, that without a passport I can do nothing for you?"

"Sir, I have brought my passport. I found it in my parcel of clothes last night."

"How dare you try to deceive me? You have got some one else's passport."

"Indeed, sir!"

"Silence! give it me. I'll teach you Jews to play tricks upon me. What's your name?"

"Abraham Ben Judah. Sir, *pray* hear me. No Jew here would give me a passport; they would rather prevent my having one."

"Yes, yes, I know. You have sold your religion, and made them angry; but I don't believe you. You call yourself Abraham Ben Judah to suit this passport. Perhaps you stole it."

"Pray, sir," pleaded Abraham, "look at this letter. You will find my name in it."

"I tell you I can't read English."

"But here is one from the Consul-general—from the English Consul-general."

"What business have you with the English Consul-general? How dare you, a Russian subject, go to him?" (He forgot that he had just before said, he did not believe Abraham's account of himself.) "I'll put you in prison for that. Ho, kawass! out with him." But the matter was cut short by the entrance of the Consul-general himself, to whom the secretary made a

most profound bow, and, changing his tone, said, "This Jew has a letter for your Excellency from the English Consul-general."

The Count de Basiloff put out his hand without speaking, took the letter and read it. It must have been a good one, for he spoke kindly.

"Jew, I am told here that you are a respectable person, known to Colonel Grey's friends in Jerusalem, and that you need help from me, but have forgotten your passport. What proof have you that you are a Russian subject?"

"Sir, here is my passport; I found it last night in my luggage."

The Count glanced at it, and said, "It is perfectly regular; what do you require?"

Abraham then told his story as briefly as he could, for he saw by the knitting of the Count's brows that he was impatient, and asked for some one to help him in searching the houses of the Russian Jews in Beyrout for his boys.

Here the secretary, to whom the Consul-general turned, raised difficulties, and finally proved, with a malicious smile, that every person in the consulate would be engaged until three o'clock. "At three o'clock you may come again, and we will send some one with you." Some one else here entered the room and engaged the attention of the Consul-general. Abraham only had time to say, "But, Excellency, if my boys are put on board ship before then?"

"Come and tell me," was the answer; and again,

at a signal from the secretary, who seemed to take a pleasure in tormenting him, he was pushed out of the room by the kawass.

With a heavy heart he turned once more to the beach. Cast off by the Jews, hated by the Christians, he for a moment felt as if he must lie down and die, there was no longer peace for him in this world. But then the words, "Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you, and revile you falsely for My sake," came into his mind, and he got up again from the stone on which he had sat down and continued his way; but he was so weary, that by the time he reached the place where Mr Brown was, he could stand no longer.

That kind friend, on hearing his story, told him to cheer up, for they would have the boys yet. "I'm not going to let a father be robbed of his boys, if we do give the Consul-general a little trouble, and you see how kind he was last night. Cheer up, my man, cheer up, you'll have your boys yet."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CHASE AND CAPTURE.

BUT this was too much for poor Abraham, and set him a-crying. "Tut-tut, man, don't you cry. Here, you have not slept these two nights, I'll be bound. Take some of this breakfast. Antonio brought it hot

an hour ago. 'Tis cold now, but it will do you good," —and he made him take a little coffee and some food, and then said, "Now put your head down there and sleep for half an hour. Why! man, I'm an Englishman; I'll knock down any one that tries to put your boys into a boat while I'm here. So go to sleep, I tell you. Yes, yes, I'll wake you in half an hour."

Abraham slept, but started up just as his kind friend, watch in hand, was going to awaken him. "Now you're a man again; do you stay here. I must go to my warehouse, for I have got an appointment; but I'll send you my Maltese boy Tony, and he'll do whatever you tell him. If your boys come down, lay hold of them, and he'll help you. Hold on like a Briton till I come, and we'll see who'll take 'em. I'm not a Yorkshireman for nothing."

Abraham watched in vain for more than two hours. Then he found the heat of the day overpowering him, and bringing on sleepiness, which he could only resist by walking up and down on the beach. While he was so engaged there came up to him an old acquaintance—a Jew from Russia whom he had not seen for a dozen years, and of whose arrival in Palestine he had not heard. It was evident he knew nothing of Abraham's change; but met him with a friendly greeting, such as no Jew had bestowed upon him since he had become a Christian. He had been but a short time in Palestine, and brought much news of Rabbi Abraham's friends and family, and of his old mother whom he had left about thirty years ago, and had

never since seen. She sent him her blessing, and desired he would say kaddish for her faithfully, for she must soon die. Poor Abraham thought, if she did but know all, it would kill her.

His friend pulled out a pocket-book full of papers, and said, he believed he had a letter for Abraham from his youngest brother Benjamin. "Come in here a moment until I find it." So saying he led the way into a coffee-shop close by, and sitting down, rummaged over his papers. "Here it is. No, that is from my wife; she will soon follow me with the children."

At these words Abraham recollected himself and started up. "Where are you going? Here is your brother's letter!" But a sudden suspicion had seized the mind of Rabbi Abraham, and he rushed out just in time to see a boat pushing off from the shore, and in it were his boys!

Tony had fallen asleep, but in a moment he was awakened and sent off for Mr Brown. The kind Jewish friend who had played his part so adroitly, laughed and waved his hat in triumph to the boat party. Nathan Wilner returned the salute. The boat made for the Greek vessel lying farthest out; and just as Mr Brown arrived breathless, they could see it touch the ship's side.

"Why, man, what have you done? Why did you not knock them all down?"

"Never mind now, sir; it was a trick; but help me, we must run to the Russian Consul's."

"Ay, ay! did you see them before they set sail?"

"Yes, I saw them."

"What! saw them and let them go! What a fool you must be!"

Abraham did not stop to explain, but they ran to the Russian consulate office. The secretary met them at the door, cigar in mouth, going to dinner. "I told you to come at three. It is only one."

Mr Brown began to speak to him, and tell him that the boys were on board, and the ship would set sail immediately, for the wind was fair.

"Tell him I don't understand English; and come again at three."

"It will be too late at three. Pray, sir, hear me!"

"We can't alter office business for every Jew that comes. Come at"——

But here, providentially, the Consul-general again appeared, and Abraham rushed forward and seized his hand, saying, "Help, Excellency, help! my boys are on board the ship!"

The Count could understand English, and speak it too, and very politely listened to Mr Brown's account of the need for immediate measures. The secretary had thrown away his cigar when the Consul-general appeared, and now stood sulkily by, waiting to see the end of this affair, which was keeping him from dinner.

"You say the vessel is Greek; are you sure of that?"

"Yes," said Mr Brown; "part of her cargo was shipped by me for the house of Lascarides & Co. She is their ship."

"And you saw this man's boys go on board of her?"

"He saw them in the boat, and I saw the boat reach the ship."

"Then," said the Count, turning to his secretary, "you will go to Monsieur Metaxi, the Greek Consul, with my compliments, and obtain a kawass from him for the search of the vessel. Take a kawass with you, and seize the boys and Nathan Wilner, and bring them to me."

The Count then, bowing to Mr Brown, went on his way.

The secretary turned on his heel, muttering something about cursed Jews. The expression on his face caught Mr Brown's eye. He ran after the Consul-general, and obtained permission for himself and Abraham to accompany the secretary. A kawass was sent back to say so. The secretary looked very angry, but could say nothing. The Greek consulate was not very far off. The Consul looked very much astonished at seeing the Russian secretary in such company, but acceded at once to the request of Count de Basiloff. A kawass of the Greek consulate, with his silver stick, accompanied the whole party to the water's edge. Mr Brown's Maltese Antonio had engaged a boat, by his master's orders; and in a few moments the Arab boatmen were pulling lustily at the oars, chanting as they did so. The sails of the ship were all set, and the wind was fair. Before the boat had got half-way out, they saw her begin to move.

Malicious pleasure shone in the face of the secretary as he saw Abraham start up in agony. "The ship is going away! she is moving!"

"Hallo! so she is. Here, Tony, push that man away, and take his oar," said Mr Brown; "show yourself a Maltese, now, and row if you can."

He himself seized the oar of the nearest Arab. "I could row once. Now, tell those fellows to put up their sail. I 'll give them a pound if they catch that rascally Greek."

The wind was fair for the boat as well as for the ship, and she flew over the water; but still the ship gained.

"More sail there," cried Mr Brown, and another sail was put up. "Row, boys, row; two pounds if you catch the Greek."

The boat plunged and creaked, and the froth flew over her bows as she rushed through the waves; and now she gained upon the ship. The breeze freshened; the canvas strained; it was as if the boat would dash head foremost into the deep. But though the danger was great, no one thought of it. The Arabs flung water on their sails to make them carry more wind, and in less than an hour they were alongside, and the Greek kawass made the master of the ship understand that he must haul to. Just as the few words necessary for this purpose had been exchanged, the mainsail of the boat split from top to bottom, and made it reel with the shock; but no harm came of it, and presently the whole party were on board ship.

All were on board,—but saw no traces of the children or of their would-be guardian, Nathan Wilner. The master of the ship—a Beyroutine Arab, and well known to Mr Brown—denied that he had any passengers on board.

The Russian secretary seemed disposed to accept this denial, and asked the master whether he would give it him in writing. He could not write; but if the others would write, he would seal it. Mr Brown lost all patience. "I tell you, Monsieur, I saw the boat with the whole party reach the ship with my own eyes."

The secretary again would not understand English, on which Mr Brown repeated the same in Arabic to the master, Haj Elia. The master did not care to entirely offend Mr Brown, shrugged his shoulders, and said, "Perhaps."

Mr Brown then turned to the Greek kawass, and said, "You have come here to search the ship; do your duty." The man obeyed, and, beginning with the deck, every hole and corner was carefully examined, until the hold was reached, and there, stowed away among barrels, bales, and casks, were the two boys, and Nathan and his wife—the latter shivering with terror on seeing the formidable persons who had come to arrest them.

If the secretary was slow to aid in the search, he now distinguished himself by heaping abuse, and blows, and kicks upon the unfortunate Nathan. The wife rushed in to save her husband, on which she all but received a

murderous blow; when Mr Brown, who could bear it no longer, laid firm hold on the dandy slim figure of the secretary, and popped him down among the barrels, where it was impossible for him to get out without help. He was in a fury—white with rage; talked of Count de Basiloff, the Consul-general, &c., &c

But Mr Brown only said, "Don't let an Englishman see you when next you want to beat a woman, though she is a Jewess—that's all."

Meanwhile Abraham's two little boys were in the height of joy, one on each knee, in their father's arms. But he, poor man, could not speak. The excitement of the chase, the agony of suspense, had suddenly ceased, and the shock had prostrated him.

Mr Brown patted him on the shoulder, saying, "Cheer up! cheer up! It's all right now, isn't it? They're fine little fellows, too; worth a pound a piece. I'd have given five, though, rather than let them be stolen."

But suddenly perceiving the deadly paleness of Abraham's face, he took the master of the ship aside, who presently brought him a glass of raki and a biscuit, which the friendly Englishman administered with his own hands, just in time to keep Abraham from fainting. He then took up the youngest boy in his arms, and the other by the hand. Haj Elia—as usual with the Arabs—adhered to the successful party, and, Greek though he was by religion, took Abraham by the arm and helped him up on deck and into the boat, leaving the Russian secretary to be picked up out of the hold by the two kawasses, which he was, with all due solemnity; and

the party descended into the boat in very different mood from that with which each had entered it. Nathan Wilner and his wife were already there, glad to escape from the Russian secretary. The wife was less crestfallen than her husband, who had received some very severe blows from the secretary, and foresaw that imprisonment was the least which was before him.

She, though still shaking with fright, could not help looking at the Englishman with a curious mixture of gratitude and anger—gratitude for his rescue of her, and anger at the boys being snatched from her husband's pious care. Whenever she could do so unobserved by Mr Brown, she muttered curses at them and at Abraham.

The secretary was puzzled where to sit in the now crowded boat. Not next to either of the Jews—in his life he had never sat near a Jew. Not next to the Englishman—that was almost as bad; besides his disgust at Mr Brown personally, that gentleman had now a little Jewish boy on his knee. The youngest had gone to his father; but the eldest, with the true instinct of childhood, had felt that this was a friend with whom he might be safe. So the poor secretary was fain to sit down—probably also for the first time in his life—between two kawasses.

The wind was now against them, and it took nearly three hours to row the heavily-laden boat back to the shore.

They landed. Nathan Wilner and his wife were marched off in custody of the Russian kawass. The

Greek kawass received his backsheesh. The secretary bestowed a parting benediction on both Abraham and Mr Brown, and stalked off. Suddenly recollecting himself, he turned back and called to Abraham. The Consul-general's orders were that the boys, as well as Nathan Wilner and his wife, were to be brought to him; he must give up his boys again: and he ordered the Greek kawass to seize them.

"No such thing," said the indefatigable Mr Brown; "let 's all go together: we 'll do nothing by halves."

It was a long and weary way to the Consul-general's country-house. The secretary mounted a horse and rode on before, leaving the Jewish party in custody of the two kawasses.

But at last they all got there, and found Count de Basiloff at home, and though a shade more stiff towards Mr Brown, yet perfectly polite. He told Abraham that he was at liberty to go, and take his boys with him, but that he must come next day and prosecute Nathan Wilner, who stood trembling at a distance. This he did not wish to do. But Mr Brown would not agree with him in this. He said such doings must not go unpunished; and so Nathan and his wife were left prisoners at the consulate till morning. Next day Abraham succeeded in persuading Mr Brown to go with him and obtain their release. Mr Brown could not understand why they should be pardoned, because they had done all this mischief out of religious zeal and conscience.

But when Abraham represented that if prosecuted

and condemned, they must remain prisoners and exposed to the tender mercies of the secretary, Mr Brown gave way, and accompanied him once more to the Russian consulate, and succeeded in getting their discharge, on the ground, first, that for his part Abraham forgave them; and that, for their offences as towards the consulate, the fright, and beating, and night's imprisonment which they had suffered, were enough, taken together with the forfeiture of their whole passage-money, which Haj Elia the shipmaster had kept as his share in the whole transaction.

The Consul-general fined Nathan Wilner severely, and then dismissed him; and Rabbi Abraham and his boys returned to Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NAOMI FOUND—SARAH AND HER SON GERSHON.

WALTER had not yet seen my Naomi; and I kept my secret, because I wished to see whether he would be struck by her appearance as I had been. Her real name was Sarah.

She came on the day appointed, for her work. Walter had gone out before breakfast, gun in hand, to shoot wild pigeons, which abound in the olive-groves north of the city. He was always punctual; so about breakfast-time I called Sarah into the room,

and made her stand near the window, so that the light should fall fully upon her, and, at the same time, that she should be well seen by Walter as he entered the door.

My Siloam milk-woman had brought me, on her head, a large basket of apricots from her sister's orchard at Bethany. What a picture they were! Not amber-coloured all over, like the early apricots of a few weeks before, (which come from Gaza,) but with blushing rosy cheeks, like nectarines. I made Sarah put the basket on a stool, and fetch me a variety of vine leaves and sprays from the court, and help me to arrange a dish of the fruit to set before Walter at breakfast. He used to say he could eat better from having something pretty to look at; and besides, I wanted him to paint a few of these beauties for my own private collection of the fruits and flowers of Palestine.

His step was soon heard at the outer door, and his knock at the funny little ring of iron which was meant for a knocker, and then he crossed the court and stood in the room. "Good morning, Emily. I have brought you—who is this? are you a magician?"

"Now don't look at her so, or you will frighten her. She is a poor Jewess who is to come and work here now and then."

"You wicked, artful thing, I can see you smiling—that is to be Naomi."

"Do you think her a Naomi? Will she do?"

"To be sure she will do. Poor thing! she looks as

if she had gone through at least as much grief as Naomi herself though."

"And so I believe she has; but don't look so hard at her, she is already uncomfortable. There—I must send her away; for if she takes fright, you will lose her altogether."

"Just a moment longer. I am looking at you now, not at her at all. There's character and decision in the way she stands; and she is tall, and what a fine nose and mouth she has! I wish I had seen her before age made those lines in her face. She must have been splendid; and that complexion, it's bright still. How glorious it must have been when she was young!"

"You're unreasonable, Master Walter, like all painters and poets. If she were young, and in the pride of her beauty, where would have been your Naomi?"

The dish of apricots was arranged. I had purposely been slow, to give Walter time. And now Sarah took up the basket; but before doing so, I put some of them into her hands for her breakfast. Being a Jewess, I knew she could not eat any of our cooked food, and I had forgotten to reserve some unboiled milk for her.

She looked up, with thanks in her eyes, as well as in the words "Que biva muchos años," and left the room.

"Let me look at your birds before we sit down. Poor little darlings, what delicate feathers! I should think it a sin to kill them, if the walk and the sport did not give you such a good appetite, and were not so neces-

sary for you, with your sitting-still work. Now, you must reward me by giving me a sketch of the birds and that dish of fruit. Look, what a contrast! How lovely the gray feathers, the brilliant apricots, and the fresh green vine leaves!"

"Yes, yes; so I will. But I can think of nothing but Naomi now. How did you find her?"

I told him of my sketching-day at the hospital, &c., &c.

"And you never gave me a hint all this time?"

"I wanted to see whether she fitted your imaginary Naomi; and if I had told you before, that would have prevented your judging for yourself."

"Yes, and deprived you of the pleasure of giving me the surprise. But you won't let me look at her; pray, how am I to paint her?"

"Oh, you see, I shall be very desirous of acquiring the Spanish language, (as indeed I am,) and shall want her to come and tell me all sorts of words; then you can be drawing or painting her all the time, and sometimes you can have a peep at her when she is at her work. I will make her sit and sew in the court yonder, in the shade, so that you can see her without her perceiving it, especially if you shut the trellis door, and look through that."

"What! paint through a trellis! take a portrait through a lattice! That is an original device! Well done, Emily!"

Poor Sarah could not sew, and I found to my surprise that scarcely any of the Oriental Jewesses had an

idea of holding their needle. The "puntos," or point-edging for the white sheets and the chemises, was done by a few of the more clever, and some few could knit; but excepting the coarsest tacking, and a little awkward hemming, done backwards, *i.e.*, beginning at the left-hand corner of the seam, they could literally do no sewing. Sarah was rather old to learn; but she was very willing, poor thing, to work for her bread: and I found that all her earnings were carried home, for the support of her married daughter and the dear little child whom she had in her arms when first she came to the house. Her son-in-law, Gershon, who had another elder boy, earned a scanty livelihood for them all by hawking cotton prints, coloured handkerchiefs, and such like, to the houses of the Moslems, for purchase by the hareem.

They were willing enough to buy, but they paid him as they liked, and when they liked. They did not often steal from his pack, although he was obliged sometimes to allow his goods to be taken into the interior of the houses for inspection by some invisible lady. The slaves were the worst. They would sometimes snatch small articles before his face, but an appeal to the mistress was generally successful; and if she did not cause the stolen article to be returned, her lord would do so. His Moslem pride would not allow that a Jewish pedlar should be able to say that he had been robbed at Effendi So-and-so's house. Besides this, the love of dispensing justice, which was so remarkable in ancient caliphs of the Haroun el Rashid and Omar

type, still lingers among these descendants of Omar's companions in arms. Their pride is flattered by being appealed to, and recognised as having the power, nay, the sole power, of dealing summary justice in their own hareem. A naughty, pilfering slave would be seized on the spot by her elder and better-taught fellows, who had lived long enough in the effendi's family to be as jealous as himself of the honour of their lord's name. They would hold the squealing culprit, while the master dealt her a few harmless blows with the heel of his own slipper.

I saw that done one day from the very place where Helaneh had spied my silver spoons. The shrieking attracted my attention, and on getting up to the wall, I saw our friend, the thief of the spoons, held by one yet more sturdy than herself, who, however, had much ado to retain the struggling victim, while the white-turbaned lord belaboured her. The wives were all the while unconcernedly turning over the wares in Gershon's pack; but they had their dark muslin handkerchiefs on so as to entirely conceal their features, and then a corner was drawn aside, to allow of one eye being used to judge of the colour of a thing. Poor Gershon's wan face told that his gains were not excessive. He used to come, when the day's work was over, and fetch his mother-in-law home. He often had to wait months and even years for his few piastres. The debt never was denied, or at least very rarely; but his Moslem customers would put their own price on his articles, and then pay him a trifle occasionally when he

called, *as a favour*. He had no idea of demanding it as a *right*. Poor fellow! his trade would cease altogether, if a Jewish dog, as they called him, were to be heard insisting upon his dues.

God is bountiful, and the Jew must be allowed to live, but as a favour—on suffrance. And yet they used to trust him in an astonishing manner. When some imprisoned fair one required an unusually expensive article of dress for going to appear in state at the bath, among the *beau monde* of Jerusalem, before a wedding, (going to the bath is a part of the ceremonial,) if she could not coax the money out of her lord and master, she would buy it all the same from Gershon, and give him in pledge some article of jewellery—a ring, a bracelet, or a gold necklace; and when her lord missed it, he would be sure to give the necessary funds for redeeming the pledge. And thus the poor, half-starved Gershon would sometimes have in his miserable cotton pack, or hidden away in his tarboosh or his bosom, gold and diamonds enough to turn any but a very honest man into a rogue. But there was less temptation to steal than one could have supposed, or rather, there would be more risk in case of dishonesty; albeit these fair ladies had no receipt, and although they knew not so much as the street in which Gershon's wretched home lay, their husbands and fathers —landlords of the houses in the Jewish quarter—knew well enough, or if they did not, they knew where the chief rabbi lived, and could easily, at any time, make him pay dear for any stolen article, or produce the cul-

prit. No Jew would run the risk of an excommunication by his spiritual chief, even though he would otherwise gain by dishonesty, and escape detection; and no Jew would incur the danger of being pounced upon by some effendi, accused of having robbed him, thrust into prison, brought before the cadi, condemned by the testimony of two Moslem witnesses, and suffered to perish in the loathsome jail among Arab criminals of the worst kind, unless his own rabbis could manage to raise money enough to bribe all those concerned in the administration of *justice* to let him out. Thus it was become "a'adeh" to trust Jewish pedlars, both men and women; and the honesty of these Jewish pedlars was alike their pride and their policy.

CHAPTER XXIV.

JEWISH CUSTOMS—MIDNIGHT WEDDING PROCESSION.

At first when Sarah used to come to our house, I sometimes offered her food; but the only things I could get her to accept were coffee without milk; eggs unboiled, which she would roast in the embers for herself; bread, after she had seen that it was made and brought to the house by a Jewess, and kept in a clean basket of its own; and milk, when it came fresh in the jar of the fellahhah, and had not yet been poured into any of our vessels.

so; but next day I found it on the ground near the house, smashed."

"Yes, that is because the law of Moses directs vessels of earthenware to be broken when defiled; but metal vessels can be cleaned with fire and scouring. For the same reason, they will not touch milk which has been boiled in a saucepan, where meat or soup may possibly have been put, nor eat eggs that we have cooked in our vessels, or bread, either for fear of pollution, or because the prescribed offering of dough has not been thrown into the fire. But there are some of the less strict Jews who will accept bread, if they see that it is carefully made, and kept in a clean place. The Polish Jews are usually the most strict in these matters. Another reason for Jews refusing to touch milk, besides the possible unlawfulness it may have contracted from having been in a saucepan used for non-Jewish meat, is the fear of infringing the law: 'Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk,' (Exod. xxiii. 19.) This prohibition appears to have been directed against a heathen custom; but the rabbis have so much extended it, as to make it unlawful for a person to use any butter or milk with meat at all, or to eat butter, cheese, or milk, until about three hours after meat has been eaten."

"While I am asking questions, please to tell me what Rabbi Abraham meant by saying that his mother wished him to say 'kaddish' for her."

"The Jews believe in a kind of purgatory after death, and it is incumbent upon children to pray for

the souls of their parents. These prayers are called kaddish. So that not to have children to say kaddish for one after death, is considered a very serious affliction. All the Jews are on this account anxious to have sons, who may survive them. The loss of an only son is a peculiarly severe trial; and, of course, when that son becomes a Christian, the affliction is even more keen and distressing than if he had died in the faith, especially to his poor mother, who, through many long patient years of care for her child, looked forward to his laying her bones in the grave, and, with the duty and affection of a son, repeating kaddish for her soul."

Our ride this afternoon was round by the city walls to the Mount of Offence, in search of the wonderful discoveries of Dr Edward Clarke—the remains, as he considered them, of Solomon's idolatrous worship of Ashtoreth, &c. The wonder resolved itself into an old disused cistern, such as may be found anywhere in the environs of Jerusalem. The view, however, was very grand, and well worth the ride. This mount overlooks the temple-ground and the city, and also has a very fine view towards the Moab country eastwards. It was no doubt well suited for temples dedicated to the gods of that country, and especially with its unbroken eastern prospect, for a temple of the sun. On the eastern brow of the mount there was a heap or tumulus, which does not appear to be natural. May not this be the remains of the temple or altar to the Moabite gods? Its position is very remarkable, and possibly, if opened,

it might yield relics in proof of what can otherwise be only a guess. The altar and idols were destroyed by Josiah, but some curious remains may yet be buried here. Strange that altars to false gods of the heathen should have been for one moment tolerated here, lifted high up in impudent rivalry of the matchless temple to Israel's God, which Solomon himself had reared upon Moriah. Poor weak human nature! Its inconsistencies are less intelligible than its downright sins.

While we stood thus musing, the clear, sonorous voice of the muezzin was borne upward by the breeze from half a dozen minarets of the Holy City. Here was another instance of God's long-suffering. How wonderful, that day after day—five times a day—year after year, and century after century, men should be permitted to proclaim, in the face of heaven, the falsehood that Mohammed the usurper is the prophet of God! And this in Jerusalem, the Holy City, once the dwelling-place of Divine glory, and the very scene of our Saviour's real ministry, of His death, and of His resurrection! That while the sound of Christian bells is forbidden here, in the earliest home of the Church, the very rocks which bore testimony to the Divinity of our Lord should echo and re-echo the triumphant notes of imposture! Were it not for a continual looking forward to the better things to come—were it not that one can see and feel that the dawn of the brighter day is already begun—to live in Jerusalem would be insupportable. Not only from the oppressed Jew, but also from the inmost heart of the devout Christian, is the

prayer daily wrung, on beholding the desecration of most holy places—"O Lord, how long?"

Is there any Christian who could be contented to live in the Holy City, even for a short period, without trying to help—trying to do something towards arousing the Oriental Christians—winning back the Jews to the faith of Moses and the prophets—rolling off the curse of Moslemism? Surely in Jerusalem there is no medium between hopeless despair and active exertion, in however small a sphere. Oh that all who visit the Holy City would remember the words of one who, though a monk, was no mere idler in Christian sanctuaries—St Jerome of Bethlehem:—"It is not praiseworthy to have been in Jerusalem—but to have lived well in Jerusalem."

One Sunday morning, the Beyrout post brought us an Arabic letter from Jaffa, which, however, we were neither of us able to read. So, after evening service, we called on Mr Andersen, and asked him to do so. It was to the effect, that the boxes of furniture and painting materials had arrived from England *viâ* Beyrout. The direction outside the letter ran thus:—"To Jerusalem, the holy, and honourable, and well-defended. In ascending, may this reach to the hand of the honoured and respected sir, the glory of the Christian religion, the noble—may God Almighty preserve his existence—Signor Walter Russell."

The letter began with three close lines of compliments and kissing of hands; then stated, that the boxes were so very large, no camel could carry them.

Of course, a camel can only carry boxes or parcels on its sides; and therefore large or heavy packages must either be divided into two, or else slung between two camels. Walter decided upon going down to Jaffa, and having the boxes opened under his superintendence, and repacked in smaller ones.

As we passed through the church premises, we found a crowd of the masons and their relations waiting for the Consul to pass. On seeing him, they rushed forward and kissed his hands, overwhelming him with expressions of gratitude. The soldiers had seized them the day before, and were about to send them to St Jean d'Acre, for forced labour on the fortifications, and the Consul had obtained their release. The men were all Christians—two Greek, one Latin, and two Armenian. It was amusing to see the Consul, unable to extricate himself, even with the help of his kawasses. "May God build up your house! May God lengthen your days! May He increase your prosperity! May He multiply your good! May your house ever be green! May your children be preserved to you!" were some of the blessings echoed by many voices.

One of the released prisoners, a brother of our servant Constantine, was to be married this very night; and the whole party went off to the wedding. At about ten o'clock, the procession passed near our house, consisting of at least fifty people, with torches and lanterns, pipes and tabors, and singing and all clapping hands in measure. One party would occasionally stop to perform a circular dance; and

at other times the women lifted up their voices in the el-el-el-lu-u-u.

There was another Oriental accompaniment, namely, the howling of the street dogs. Altogether the scene was very picturesque, with the wild waving lights in the dark night. Some of the lanterns were of enormous size, but every one appeared to carry one, either large or small. Some people were singing from books. The whole moved slowly. Some youths were sprinkling rose-water over the people. The bride came last of all, smothered in rose-coloured crape spangled with gold and red artificial flowers, over where probably the head was situated. She was supported by white-sheeted matrons on each side. It was curious to see how the men were all grouped in one party, and the women all in another. We could trace the procession a long way in the winding streets by the glare of the torches and the sound of the voices. The suddenness with which the bridal cry rose upon the still night air, was as remarkable as the silence and darkness, when all had passed away.

CHAPTER XXV.

WALTER'S TRIP—NATIVE CONSULS AT JAFFA.

WALTER was very fortunate in having as his travelling companion for the Jaffa journey, not only Mr Andersen, who was going to the Lebanon, in order to recruit

after repeated attacks of ague, but also Mr Wells, the Consul, who was going down to Jaffa to meet a British man-of-war just arrived from Beyrout and Europe. His trip will be best described in the words of his journal-letter to me:—

"LATIN CONVENT, JAFFA, *June* 1846.

"(*In full view of the sea and of our frigate lying at anchor.*)

"MY DEAR EMILY.—We got down safely and well, and I am at work getting the boxes put to rights by uncouth Arab carpenters at the English vice-consulate, which you know, so I need not describe it. Jaffa is a different world from Jerusalem—far more Oriental. If I were illustrating the 'Arabian Nights,' I should find many more pictures here than in Jerusalem. There is more Orientalism, more glow. The banana and the palm wave among the orange groves, and Europeanism has made but little way.

"However, Europeanism has not as yet altered Jerusalem much; but the Holy City, though also Oriental, is sterner, bolder, grander. Its climate is bracing; and instead of orange groves, it has battlemented walls for its characteristics.

"Jaffa is very delightful, but no more like Jerusalem than the nest of the dove is like the royal eagle's eyrie on the mountain top.

"But enough of this moralising: I will give you a journal of events since the morning I left you.

"My companions were well mounted: the Consul accompanied by a train, including a Latin-Arab dragoman, (a large stout man, in flowing robes, widespread

turban—a wretched horseman,) and Moslem kawasses. My servant was a Greek Christian-Arab; Mr Andersen's an Abyssinian. What a mixture!

"Got without adventure past Aboo Gosh, and to the resting-place at a half-ruined wely, (Moslem saint's tomb,) under some fine oak trees at the bottom of the ravine half-way to Ramlah. While feeding there, numerous groups of passengers took rest for a short time: one old man, the chief of a party, announced himself as a Christian of Bethlehem. We gave him the relics of our feast.

"Mounted again. From the heights beyond got distant views of the sea, and could distinguish the white sails of the British frigate.

"Forward across the glorious plain to the convent at Ramlah. After dinner we went to see the 'Tower of the Forty,' where the surrounding buildings, both above and below, well deserve a visit. We climbed to the top, and found by the compass that the sides of the tower are correct with the cardinal points. Owls were flitting in plenty; the young moon was in the west, with stars around, and then the rolling plain stretching like a sea beneath.

"I had lingered, giving myself up to imaginings, while Mr Andersen and the Consul's dragoman were deciphering Arabic inscriptions below. There passed in review before my mind the vast warrior hosts who, at one time or other, had swept over this plain—Jewish and Canaanitish, Philistine, Egyptian, Assyrian, Syrian, Grecian, Roman, Saracen—crusaders out of every Euro-

pean nation—Turkish, modern French, and again Egyptian and Turkish. Who next?

"At length, though there were no city gates, as in Jerusalem, about to close upon us, it became necessary to return to the convent for the night.

"Early in the morning we went forward towards Jaffa, across the plain, fragrant and dewy. Larks were carolling overhead.

"People were carrying the harvest home upon camels, instead of upon mules and donkeys; the distances to carry being probably greater than among the hills near Jerusalem.

"The camels bore bells, dreamily musical in the distance. What abundance of corn! Huge extensive plains—one field of corn as far as the eye can reach. In one place there must have been the population of several villages at work together, and plenty of visitors, some of them white-sheeted women, seated, looking on. Large herds of cattle were about, instead of the sheep and goats around Jerusalem, coming into the stubble instantly after the cutting is done; and a lively scene it was—camels, cows, asses, dogs, children, reapers, gleaners, and visitors, and an uncouth-looking horseman, ragged, sunburnt, armed with a long spear. This was the tax-gatherer, one of the irregular horse-soldiers of the Sultan, watching the reaping, and ready to claim his share as soon as it should be threshed.

"There was tobacco-picking in some parts. Under our horses' feet, as busy as the rest, were large beetles forming balls, and rolling them before them, or pushing

them backwards; or two beetles helping each other, either both pushing backwards, or one pulling, the other pushing—sometimes up nearly a perpendicular place.

"Then we approached the fruit gardens of Jaffa. Water machines busy, and refreshing to behold; little earthen jars tied on a wooden wheel, bring up the water. Oh, the wonders of watered sand! In the trenches we saw it to be pure, unmitigated sand, in which grow forests of orange and lemon-trees, and numerous young palms coming up, and vines creeping wild over hedges of prickly-pear, or up large trees, then hanging down again.

"On the road we met a negro dervish, in very clean clothes and high drab cap. Rooks were cawing among pomegranate trees and broad-leaved wavy bananas, over which towered large trees of the sycamore fig. And there, beyond the belt of golden sand, lay our frigate, upon the blue sea, smooth, yet deceitful, for while there was not a wave visible, the masts were swinging like a pendulum.

"We all went to the Latin Convent, having letters from the Convent of San Salvador in Jerusalem. There is a fine view of the sea from my window.

"Presently there arrived the Vice-consul for England and his train, in Arab state, to pay their respects to the Consul. I could see from the terrace the flags flying in honour of his arrival—those of Russia, Prussia, United States, Greece, Denmark, and overhead, on the convent roof, the Jerusalem Templar banner; also the French,

Sardinian, and Austrian, and our own English flag. What would the Phœnician mariners say to their maritime rivals from the tin-yielding isles of Ultima Thule? They never saw so many banners wave over the house-tops of Jaffa, or so gallant a bark ride at anchor in its waters as yonder British frigate!

"There is a rumour current here that Mohammed Ali, Viceroy of Egypt, is gone to Constantinople to arrange for his son Ibrahim being made hereditary Pasha of Syria. Will England allow this?

"In the evening I saw Mr Andersen on board his Arab vessel, which is partly charged with melons, reserving sufficient space for himself, his servant, and his horse. How perfectly Oriental is the respect which he receives from all people! How well he is known! It is delightful to see him among his old friends here.

"When he was gone, I passed along the quay to look after the boxes. Looking up, I saw a nice clean old man, in Oriental flowing dress and white beard, bowing at me, with an old cocked hat, which had a little silver lace remaining on it. This was a European Consul.

"*June* 21.—Not a breath of wind on the sea. At a distance I can see Mr Andersen's boat becalmed. After breakfast the president of the convent took us to see his chapel; then the various Consuls came to visit our English Consul. The old gentleman I had seen yesterday, so comical in his cocked hat and Oriental robes, has no beard, but immense gray moustaches and a pigtail. The faded lace on his hat was once gilt.

He is a fine healthy old gentleman, and in the French Oriental war was first dragoman to Sir Sidney Smith, concerning whom and others he related circumstantial anecdotes with great glee in Italian. Sidney Smith is his great hero, and he shows a scar on his finger which he got in interposing between him and the Turkish Capudan Pasha in a quarrel. His dress is decidedly a relic of that age. It was amusing to observe his efforts to recall his former knowledge of French and a few phrases of English. He told us that it was almost beneath my window, in the Greek Convent, that Bonaparte poisoned the sick and threw them into a well.

"In the evening Mr Wells and I took a walk round by the land side of the town and on the sea-beach.

"Returning through the bazaar, we observed the custom (different from Jerusalem) of respectable merchants sitting before the cafés, as well as the meanest people, smoking, conversing, or listening at a short distance to the story-tellers.

"I am told that in everything the Moslems of this town are more bigoted than in Jerusalem in their enmity to Christians, their jealous seclusion of women, &c., &c.

"*June* 22.—Rose at five, and accomplished most of my packing. A French brig, arrived yesterday, is loading with wool for Smyrna. No English merchant-vessel has ever been seen here. I was ready to start for returning to you in the afternoon, but the Consul's business was not yet over, so I had the amusement of accompanying him in returning visits, with all the for-

malities of sherbet, coffee, &c. What a rich and racy variety of character we saw! First, a shrewd, well-spoken Armenian merchant, full of business, simply but well clad, combining in himself the American, Prussian, and Tuscan Vice-consuls: he is aided by a younger brother, who speaks good English. Then, the Vice-consul for Spain—a Syrian of Spanish origin—speaking several languages in perfection. Next, my old friend of the cocked hat received us at his door, the cocked hat in hand, pigtail depending over a robe of faded pea-green silk trimmed with fox-skin. He recounted more anecdotes of Sir Sidney Smith, and referred to the consular glories and alliances of his family for three or four generations in Jaffa. His pompous and stately manner made irresistibly droll several choice phrases of nautical English which he had recollected since yesterday. He must be about eighty years of age.

"After this came the Greek; but oh for some humorist's pen to describe him! I shall bring you a sketch of him. Imagine a man in age under thirty; tall; always arrayed in Albanian costume; a long face, its expression that of irremediable folly, with a smiling simper; eyes almost always shut; three fingers of the left hand laid on a beardless chin, and the head poised on one side, surmounted by a cap of scarlet and gold, still more sloping in the same direction. The oddest of all was his sitting in front of a wretched picture of himself, painted in Greece, wretched in every point but in that of being a capital likeness for expression of char-

acter. His clothes, of light powder blue, are bedizened with gold and silver; and his manner of skipping about in the Albanian petticoat of white cotton adds to the ludicrous effect of the whole. His dragoman is the counterpart of himself; his eyes also shut, and apparently dying, in imitation of his master.

"Then came Dr Lamisericordia, jolly and half-cracked, so fat that he can hardly toddle, (as is also his wife,) and talking—talking—talking! Query—Does he cure his patients? I should not like to be one of them.

"Then the Sardinian Consul—a big, honest, native Arab, well-to-do in the world; the French and Russian Vice-consuls—active, wide-awake men—each a native of the country he represents. Why has England no Englishman here?

"Returning by the single Gate of Jaffa, and through the bazaars, there were the same strange groups smoking and listening, by the light of two or three tumblers of oil with a wick in the midst, to a wandering ballad reciter, in one place, with his little guitar, themselves at the end of each verse singing the chorus; in another place a man of superior grade, reading a MS. book with excellent elocution: 'In days of old, when there was war between the Arabs and Christians, there lived a certain king, whose name,' &c.

"In going through the streets we made a goodly show, for the officious, fussy Vice-consul would accompany Mr Wells everywhere, and the latter explained that to have dispensed with his attendance would have

been considered by the Oriental world a public disgrace; and so we stalked along, preceded by three kawasses, striking their silver sticks in concert, and followed by the Vice-consul, his dragoman, and the Jerusalem dragoman, who was treated by the others with almost as much respect as if he had dropped from the skies. It was a great bore, however; and the Consul was tired of bowing long before we got home, for everywhere the people rose up before him and made salaams, which he was obliged to return.

"When at the convent for the evening, there passed our windows a Greek vessel, allowed to dredge for old anchors on condition of giving one-third of the profit to Government. They have already found a good many, and no wonder! on such a coast as this, where vessels are often compelled to cast off their anchors suddenly and escape. Some copper-coloured Arabs were swimming like fishes near our window, and English sailors ashore making fun of grave Arabs sitting smoking.

"Here, my dear Emily, is a letter of sketches for you. Your imagination must fill up and colour them. I can add no more; for the camel-driver who is to take this is smoking at the door, and his growling animal making an insufferable noise by way of telling him it is time to go Ramlah-wards. Good-bye. I hope to be with you the day after to-morrow."

Walter got back safe, well, and sunburnt, the day he expected, and was very much the better for his trip. He rode up with the Consul and eight officers of the frigate.

"Our ride was as merry as possible. They joined us in the lane outside Jaffa, among orange gardens, under a prodigious sycamore-tree, among the branches of which up aloft were children with baskets gathering the fruit. I tasted some, but it is not so pleasant as the common fig. Two monks journeyed with us to Ramlah, where we dined altogether upon ship's pork, biscuit, and rum, from the frigate. This morning we were all up soon after one, breakfasted on ship's cocoa, and then started in the cool air, the stars overhead brilliant beyond description.

"At sunrise we came to a well, where was a halt of Ashkenazim Jews, their wives, their little ones, and their cattle. While some were around the well, others were putting on the veil with blue border and fringes for morning devotion; the prayer-book—Hebrew, of course—rested on a rock. Poor things! they were newly arrived in the land of their fathers. One of them was a strikingly handsome young man. Doves were cooing among the trees, and it was a peaceful scene. Our armed party formed a strong contrast—the officers bristling with pistols and side-arms, yet gentle enough, for were they not British sailors? Nothing more happened by the way, and here I am; so now, Emily, let's hear your stay-at-home adventures."

CHAPTER XXVI.

JUDÆO SPANISH—PRICKLY-PEARS—CLOCKS AND WATCHES.

DURING Walter's absence I employed myself as busily as possible, so as to avoid feeling lonely. Helaneh and I had the house all to ourselves; and when I was tired of silence, Arabic was my only choice, excepting on the day when Sarah came, and I had need for my few words of Spanish. Having a dictionary of that language, it was not such uphill work as Arabic, in which our only dictionary was one in four ponderous volumes, Arabic and *Latin!* But I soon discovered that not all Sarah's words were to be found in the Spanish dictionary; she also mingled Hebrew with her talk, and even a few words which turned out to be Turkish, (her youth was passed at Salonica,) and she could also speak a very little Romaic Greek. The manner of pronouncing some of the letters, too, was peculiar: all the *ch*'s and *j*'s, which are guttural in Castilian, she softened; and in words containing the letter *r* after a vowel, she would put it before the vowel—"vedrura" for "verdura," "probe" for "pobre," and many such like. A long time afterwards a Spanish gentleman and lady came to Jerusalem, and for want of other language I was obliged to speak my Jewish-Spanish. They were highly amused, and the gentleman told me I was speaking a dialect of three hundred

years old, like that of the chronicles, and that some of the words and peculiarities of pronunciation still survive in remote villages of Spain. Here was confirmation (if, indeed, there ever had been doubt) that the Sephardi Jews are Spanish exiles of the fifteenth century.

It was amusing to hear Sarah, in speaking of the Arabs, say, as she always did with contempt, "los Moros;" and Arabic she called "Morisco." Of this same Morisco she could understand but little, and would not learn more than was absolutely necessary.

Helaneh, with her Greek horror of Jews, was not a little put out at finding that a Jewess was to be in some sort her companion, and was at first actually going to leave my service; but then the consideration of so many piastres a month less in her pocket was a serious one, and gradually she became willing, for their sake, to tolerate the presence of poor Sarah. At first she was ill-natured enough to her, yet in course of time they became tolerably good friends, for Helaneh's was the ill-nature of prejudice, not of heart. Of course neither of them would touch the other's food, but they learned to smoke together. One afternoon, after Sarah had been most obliging in helping Helaneh in her work, I did with my own eyes see the latter take a few whiffs of her pipe, and pass it over to Sarah. Henceforth it was not uncommon to see them sharing the pipe between them.

I was standing one morning, after having finished my usual domestic tasks — viz., given the market

orders; then seen the groom measure out the allowance of barley and chopped straw for the horses' food, (by the by, it is not *chopped* straw, but trampled fine on the threshing floor;) then, by means of signs, words, and example, taught my cook Helaneh how to make some English dish, (she never forgot what I taught her;) —after all these performances, and while Sarah was occupied in preserving some fine purple plums and some greengages, (the Jewesses are very clever in making preserves,) I stood watching the groom, who had brought in a basket of prickly-pears. How they were to be got out of their thorny shell I could not imagine; but he was very clever, and first rolled them in sand, which broke most of the prickles, and then with one stroke of the knife slit open the shell without touching it; and there within lay the golden fruit about the size of an egg.

The prickly-pear is one of the most wholesome and refreshing fruits of Palestine. Cold as ice, when gathered in the early morning, it serves as a tonic for the stomach. But woe betide any one who may ignorantly touch one before it is shelled. The thorns are very numerous, and grow in little bunches all over it. They are very fine, hard, and brittle; colourless, and perfectly straight,—that is, of the same fineness at both ends,—so that, while they go deep into the skin, it is difficult to see or draw them out. The best way is, after extracting as much as possible, to rub away the rest. Being very brittle, this can be done even when under the skin. A friend of mine who had

heard much of prickly-pears, and wished to taste them, on landing at Beyrout saw them growing on the cactus plants in the hedges. She, in her simplicity, put forth her hand and gathered one. Alas! the poor hand was covered with these terrible thorns, and on the other hand being used to try and rub them off, that also was filled with them. The only resource now was to get a basin of sea sand, and spend the evening rubbing the hands with it until the thorns were ground down by the friction.

But I have forgotten my story. The clicking sound of a kawass's stick was heard; it stopped at our door. While the groom opened it, Helaneh seized her dark handkerchief and covered her face; for though of sober years of discretion, a widow, and not handsome, the kawass might not see her, because he was *a Moslem!*

Mrs Wells, her husband being with my brother at Jaffa, had come to invite me to join her that afternoon in visiting the gardens of the Armenian Convent. The very idea of gardens was delightful; but I was to give Rachel her lesson at that hour.

"Bring Rachel with you, and we will give her a double lesson. I should like to see more of her; if she be as nice as she is pretty, she must be a charming girl."

"She is very nice, very simple, but very clever. You could not guess from her manner of speaking English that she has been scarcely more than two months learning."

"Will English be of any use to her?"

"Surely. She is already teaching her little brothers as fast as she can."

"True; I forgot she had brothers. And then she can read so many useful books. I suppose she has her education to begin?"

"Not quite. Mary Andersen has taken her in hand, and she is making good progress in both geography and history. It was amusing to see her almost childish wonder when first a map was put before her; but she soon seized the idea, and the next time Mary had enough to do to answer her questions, and they were very good questions. Now her father is learning geography from her. He has travelled much too; but, rabbi as he is, had very curious notions about the world and its shape, until his daughter began to impart some of her newly acquired knowledge."

The rich voice of the muezzin, breaking out into the call to prayers, from a neighbouring minaret, reminded Mrs Wells that it was already noon, and she left me, saying, "I will send the kawass to fetch you," and gave him directions to come here again, not at three or four o'clock, but at the next call to Moslem prayer, at Aser in the afternoon. So oddly is time marked here; and yet the natives do some of them carry watches. But their manner of counting the hours is so different from ours, that it is difficult to get accustomed to it. The only fixed time is sunset. That is always twelve o'clock; and an Oriental who is fortunate enough to possess a watch, sets it to that hour every evening when the muezzin informs the world that the day is ended. Of

course, as the sun sets at a different hour every day, twelve o'clock is never the same time; but Walter once tried in vain to get that into the head of an Arab visitor. It follows that noon is not a *fixed hour*, and yet the whole Oriental population use it as a fixed *period*, and count by it much more than we do. Before noon is the day to them. All their business is done before it. At noon they eat; and after it is passed, if only two minutes, they wish every one they meet "good evening" instead of "good morning;" excepting, indeed, when wishing to pay a high-flown compliment, they say, "good morning," though the salutation be afternoon. This implies that it is not morning to the speaker until the sunshine of his friend's countenance has risen upon him.

But to return. Sunset being twelve o'clock, if the nights are short, as in summer, the sun will rise at half-past nine, (our half-past four,) and this brings one o'clock to our eight; therefore noon will be half-past five. So that, of course, when the days are lengthening, the poor watch is at fault, and has to be put back again when sunset comes to make it twelve. Thus the twenty-four hours of the day in summer appear to be longer than they ought to be. "And why not?" says the Arab; "has not God made the summer days long?"

In winter all this is reversed. Noon comes at half-past seven o'clock, and at sunset the watches are all too slow, and have to be put forward. I once saw a *very* enlightened native, namely the French Consul's

dragoman, carry two watches, one in each pocket—the right hand one European, for European time; the left hand one for Arab time, with Arabic figures.

He told us that the new Pasha, just arrived from Constantinople, had a wonderful watch, containing two sets of hands and of figures, the one Turkish and the other Frank; but, as the poor old gentleman could not read either, he was obliged now and then to get his secretary to tell him what o'clock it was.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ANTIQUITIES—A JEWELLED LADY—VISITS TO GARDENS IN CONVENTS.

THE kawass came for me in the afternoon. It was odd enough to find myself walking behind him and his silver staff, my steps keeping time involuntarily to its stroke on the pavement. He led me by a way which I had only once passed before, along one of the covered bazaars. There are three of them, which run parallel to each other, from north to south—the Goldsmith's, the Spice, and the Butcher's bazaar. They are only about four feet wide, and usually much crowded. We passed through the Butcher's bazaar, at this hour almost empty. Its pavement is very curious, being made of immense slabs of fine-grained limestone, polished like marble by being constantly walked upon.

Surely this pavement must have belonged to the old city.

It struck me as I walked along, that, after all, our ideas and measurement of antiquity are comparative. They vary in different places. For instance, in England, undoubted remains of Norman times are considered old, Saxon relics ancient, and remains of the Druids and early Britons most venerable. But here our scale is differently graduated.

The Moslem period, the modern one in which we live, carries us back with ease to the times of Mohammed, and Omar, and the builders of the great Mosque —still in good preservation, albeit older than the time of our Saxon Alfred.

The Druidic age, hoary and venerable in England, coincides with what is here the seemingly recent Roman and Herodian age, at which Jewish history was almost closed, and Jewish art expiring. Nothing appears really ancient here, unless it has a history of more than two thousand years.

Here, in Jerusalem, one may see and handle coins, still fresh and perfect, as old as the second temple, which were struck and in use perhaps before the gray piles of Stonehenge were set up; and yet, in England, these latter command a feeling of veneration on the score of antiquity, almost equal to that accorded in the Holy Land to the stones of King Solomon's temple, or early Canaanitish remains, older than Moses himself.

The medium through which we in this country behold those far-off days is more powerful: they are

brought nearer to us; we almost touch them. Just as from the Mount of Olives we gaze upon the Dead Sea, as it were at our feet, so clear and blue are its waters, and can scarce believe that some thirty miles of mountain and valley lie between; or as in winter, when the Moab mountains seem, in the thin pure air, to approach so near that one imagines one could discern a man or even a goat climbing their rocky sides, and yet many a tedious hour of travel would have to be passed before even the farthest reaching crags could be attained; so it is with the events and relics of past ages. And then the living antiquities of the East! What a sensation would there be in England, if at some meeting of the British Association or Ethnological Society, a real live Druid, or even a Pict or Saxon, could be produced! and yet here we have walking about among us unchanged the represensatives of peoples older far—the Syrian, the Bedawy Arab, the Egyptian, and the Jew. Churches still flourish—the Jacobite, the Armenian, Coptic, and Greek—which were already venerable in the days of Augustine, and of our British forefathers.

My reverie was cut short by my arrival at Mr Andersen's door, where Rachel had just arrived. We walked on together to the consulate, and found Mrs Wells engaged receiving an Arab visitor, the wife of the Consul's Arabic dragoman. What a contrast between husband and wife! He, tall, stout, between forty and fifty, and wearing sombre colours and huge turban: she, a delicate little creature, scarce twenty, pale as a lily, dressed out in silks and gold embroidery,

and a score of braids of hair down her back, glittering with gold coins.

She had scarcely taken leave when another visitor appeared, an Armenian lady dressed in green silk and white, profusely adorned with diamonds, pearls, and emeralds, besides gold necklaces and bracelets, and rings on her fingers. I had never seen so many diamonds worn by one person before. She had scented flowers, especially large blossoming jasmine, among the diamonds and gold in her head-dress. Very curious it was to mark the timid deference paid by this glittering personage to the English lady, all unadorned in her simple muslin morning dress.

The Oriental lady had very little to say, at least until after coffee had been served. Then she commenced a very long story, and appeared to be asking for some favour; but Mrs Wells wisely deferred entering upon anything before having it properly explained by a dragoman; so the lady took leave, and hid all her blazing splendours under the folds of her white sheet and dark handkerchief, and walked away, followed by her black slave, who, in stooping to kiss the hand of Mrs Wells, presented her with a fine clove pink.

While Mrs Wells put on her bonnet, Rachel and I had time to admire the beautiful view from her drawing-room window. The house being situated near the Armenian convent, on the highest part of Zion, commanded a grand view northwards of the city, beginning with the castle; then our new church, whose rapidly rising walls peeped above an intervening garden; the

domes of the Church of the Sepulchre, several graceful minarets, and much of the city, rising tier above tier, to the heights of Acra. Beyond the walls and battlements swelled the Scopus heights, bending eastwards, and joining the Mount of Olives. From these windows every tent in the encampment of Titus, and every movement of his soldiers, could have been distinguished, and probably they were distinguished, by whoever lived on the spot, though not in this house, at that time.

The consulate was almost adjoining the Armenian Convent, and it took us only a few minutes to reach the gardens, which are upon the right-hand side of the street that leads to the Zion Gate, and are opposite to the convent buildings on the left. The pavement in front of the convent is overshadowed by several tall cypresses, and the spreading branches of some glorious pines which are in the garden, and form a group to be seen nowhere else in Jerusalem.

There was no great cultivation; very little of the borders and paths, which are the beauty of an English garden. But it was delicious to sit under the pine-trees, where carpets were spread upon a raised pavement, and chairs placed for us, and to listen to the sighing of the evening breeze among the branches, and watch the tints of the setting sun-light upon the Moab mountains. They looked farther off than in winter: the vividness of outline and gorgeous colouring had given place to a dreamy vagueness—a mysterious blending of grays, and blues, and violet blush; a liquid mistiness

which was no less enchanting. The promontories and precipices had vanished into golden streaks and melting shadows of ethereal blue.

I forgot myself, and was startled when an Armenian deacon, in dark blue dress, presented sherbet and sweetmeats. Rachel and Mrs Wells had been conversing; but I had heard no more than the sound of their voices, mingled with the murmur of the branches, and the peculiar wailing notes of a wild dove.

"Listen to this child, Miss Russell. She says she does not wish she had been an English girl. Is not that what you said, Rachel?"

"Yes, ma'am; at least—I mean"——

"That you don't want to belong to us. You had rather be a Russian."

"Oh no, ma'am; I had much rather be English than Russian."

"I wonder why?"

"That's a difficult question, Mrs Wells; let me answer it for her. She has seen more of English people, and had more friends among them. Is it not so, Rachel?

"Then, why don't you want to be English? You would have been taught when you were young all that you are taking so much trouble to learn now; and England is such a beautiful country!"

"My country is beautiful too."

"Where is your country?"

"Here; *this* is our country, ma'am. How beautiful it is! And when our nation come back and have it

again, it will be much more beautiful. All the mountains will be covered with vines and fig-trees, and all the towns will be full of people."

"You don't mean to say that you had rather be a Jewess than English?"

"Yes, certainly, I had rather be a Jewess. Is not my father a Jew? and my grandfather was the most learned rabbi; and was not King Solomon a Jew, and all the kings, and all the prophets? There is no other nation so great as my nation."

"Yes, yes," said Mrs Wells, half-amused and half-vexed at the subject having taken this turn. I was amazed. I had scarcely ever heard Rachel speak two connected sentences before. She was the shyest and most gentle creature; but now her cheek flushed and eye brightened. "You are quite right, Rachel," said Mrs Wells, kindly; "but I was not thinking of that. Of course, you are right to prefer belonging to the nation of David and Solomon; and I suppose you are right, too, in thinking your nation will come back to their own land."

"It says so in the Bible, ma'am. I am *sure* they will come back."

"And you are to have a vineyard of your own, Rachel, and a little house to receive your friends in. You must let me come, though I am English."

Rachel did not exactly understand whether Mrs Wells was in earnest or in jest. "I did not mean that I don't want to be English, ma'am, if I"——

"I understand you, dear; if you were not a Jewess,

you wouldn't mind being English. Tell me, are you fond of music?"

"Oh yes, very."

"What music do you like best?"

"Singing. I like the singing in church best, and Miss Andersen's guitar."

"You know, Mrs Wells, Rachel has scarcely ever heard any music. She was born in Jerusalem, and the singing in church and Miss Andersen's guitar are almost the only kinds of music she knows."

"How curious! Then you never heard an organ or a piano played?"

"No, ma'am, never. I don't know what they are."

"Then I have a treat for you, if you will come and see me again. You shall hear a little more music. My Oriental visitors are highly delighted with my piano; but they generally look more interested at seeing my fingers move on the keys than in listening to the music.

"I was surprised the other day at Mr Andersen's, at hearing an Arab tell Mary that he does not think our singing half so sweet as theirs. It is odd enough, for theirs is the most curious noise called music that I ever heard. The intervals are different from ours; there must be half and quarter tones used. I have observed that particularly in the brass band which we hear every evening at the neighbouring barracks. At first I thought the instruments out of tune; but it seems they purposely make notes which are certainly discordant to our ears."

"Oh, look!" cried Rachel, "here is the dove that has been singing so long."

A beautiful creature it was, of rich brown colour, something like the burnished feathers of a pheasant, and with exquisitely turned head and neck.

"They say," observed Mrs Wells, "that those are called ground-doves. They constantly walk about in the little olive garden under my windows."

"How very melancholy and plaintive its note is! I never heard anything like it before."

"I think they have a nest on the roof of our drawing-room, and I hear them constantly. It must be of this kind of dove that the Bible speaks, 'We mourn sore like doves.'"

"Oh yes! that is an exact description of their wailing note—'mourning sore.' Now, my ring-doves coo in a very different manner. You must come and see them; they are dear little things. One gray, with a black ring on its neck; and the other white, with a delicate white ring marked in the feathers round its neck. They are so tame that now they come and eat out of my hand; but if I turn my head, or move, they are frightened, and run back into the cage. The most curious thing, Mrs Wells, is, that they always coo when the muezzin cries the hour of prayer from the minaret."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Quite sure. Sometimes if I am busy, or there is noisy work going on in the house, I don't hear the muezzin; but they are sure to catch the first sound of

his voice, and to begin to coo; and our Moslem groom says, 'Of course, they are praying like them.' My Greek woman and he had a warm dispute the other day. She won't allow him to make out that 'any of God's creatures have turned Moslems like you, Beni-Adam,' (children of Adam,) 'you of little sense.' Though he is a good-natured fellow, this was almost too much for him, and he went off muttering ugly words at Helaneh."

The sun was almost set, and it was time to return home, for I did not wish to be late in finding my way down to the other end of the town. So we rose. The Armenian deacon now offered each of us a nosegay, composed of sweet oak-leaved geraniums, balsams, clove pinks, (dark and light,) jasmine, sweet basil, and sprays of orange leaves. He could not speak any Arabic, so that our few words of thanks in that language were lost upon him. But as we were leaving the garden, one of the monks, in black robes and high conical hood, also black, met us with many bows and a few words of English. "My friends—how—do—you—do? Good? —very good? Come again—this garden your garden —this house your house—come again to-morrow."

"Thank you," said Mrs Wells, to whom, as Consul's lady, all this was more particularly addressed. "How is it that you speak English?"

"Lady, I from India. Many English in India—my friends all." His noble black beard, depending almost to his girdle, and black eyes, were a fine study, which I only wished Walter could have been there to see.

Next day Mrs Wells took us to see the gardens of the Greek Patriarch. They were better laid out than the Armenian garden, but the glorious pine-trees were wanting. However, there were some large cypress, orange, and lemon-trees. Chairs were placed for us in the garden, and refreshment served. The sherbet napkin was beautifully embroidered in coloured silk and gold. The goblets were of cut glass, white, with pink patterns; the trays of silver. The sweetmeats were of three colours—quince jelly, delicate pink; citron in fine shreds, pale yellow; and a white kind, made of gum-mastic, flavoured with rose-water. The silver holders of the coffee cups were lovely little things, of exquisite filigree pattern. A Greek deacon served us. His robes were black cloth, and he had a black skull-cap, but no grand beard like the Armenian's. Instead of beard, whiskers, or moustache, he had a profusion of long hair, falling in bright curls over his shoulders. I afterwards found that the Greeks universally wear long hair. Strange that it should be so, when it was to the Greeks that St Paul wrote, "If a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him."*

Those who wear it very long are only the young men —and girlish enough they look; the elder clergy have it shorter, and wear beards. Some of the bishops have beards, long, silvery, and quite as handsome as those of the Armenians; though, indeed, I remember seeing one of the bishops who had, besides his venerable beard, long curly locks of snow falling over his shoulders.

* 1 Cor. xi. 14.

After the coffee had been served, the Patriarch himself joined us in the garden. He was a benign gentleman of polished manners. Besides the round cap worn by the monks, he had a veil of black crape flowing down the back. He walked about gathering flowers for us, among them some monthly roses: and then he showed us his peacocks and gazelles, and scarcely allowed us to depart at sunset. As we took leave, another deacon sprinkled rose-water upon us from a silver vessel.

We went home with Mrs Wells, who wished to fulfil her promise of letting Rachel hear a little music. To me the sound of a pianoforte, after many months of absence from mine in England, was a very great pleasure; but Rachel—I never saw anything like her! She looked on with curiosity while the instrument was being opened, and the music-book arranged; but when the first chords were struck she started, and sat motionless—almost breathless. She seemed in utter unconsciousness of everything but the music. Mrs Wells, on looking up, was surprised at the intense expression in her face.

"I need not ask you now if you like music." But Rachel scarcely answered; she was still absorbed in what she had heard.

When Mrs Wells had played for some time longer, she rose; and I took leave, but not until Rachel had timidly approached the piano to look at the keys which had produced such wondrous sounds. "Touch them, Rachel; try what you can do," said Mrs Wells: and

then turning to me, "That child must have some talent for music; it is a pity it should not be cultivated."

Rachel looked up so eagerly, that Mrs Wells smiled and said, "Tell me, will you do me credit if I teach you?"

"To make music, ma'am, like you? oh, I will be so, so glad."

"Very well, then; you shall come, and I will teach you twice a week."

Rachel almost danced home, in her joy and eagerness to tell the grand tidings to her father. The lessons were soon begun, and she proved a very apt pupil indeed, and gave almost as much pleasure to her teacher as to herself.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A RUTH FOUND—THE CITIES OF BENJAMIN—THE PASHA'S WIFE.

WALTER had now got all his painting materials, and set seriously to work upon his picture; but as yet he had not found an original for Ruth. But in this too he was very fortunate. Our servant Constantine's sister had a daughter born, and there had been a grand christening and rejoicing, and the next day his mother came to present me with a dish of the sweet things of the feast. Walter had never seen her before, and was

charmed with her soft eyes and gentle melancholy expression.

"What an admirable Ruth she will make, Emily, with that timid, pleading look, and her simple dress—not a single ornament. She is tall, too, and graceful as possible!"

I could not help smiling; but certainly there was native grace and dignity in her movements, and a pensive beauty in her face. I wondered that it had not occurred to me before, that she would make just such an original as Walter wanted, and her olive complexion would make a fine contrast to the fairer tints of his Naomi.

"How am I to get sittings from my new Ruth? She does not even come here for work. How shall I get any opportunity of painting her?"

"She looks to me a reasonable sort of creature. I will try and get Mrs Douglas (who employs her) to help me in explaining what you want. Judging by her face, I am in hopes we may persuade her to come now and then to be drawn."

We succeeded, and so once a week the mother of Murkus came to be drawn, and I made all the work I could for Sarah, so as to give Walter as many opportunities as possible of transferring her face to his canvas, unknown to herself. Thus the picture got on bravely.

My horse had been in the stable during Walter's absence, and I was not sorry to have him brought out once more for a ride. He was as frisky as possible, but very affectionate, and would cease his antics in a

moment when I called to him, and, turning his head round, would take a piece of bread from my hand as I sat on his back. Indeed, if I did not now and then offer it to him, he would turn to ask for it, for he well knew the saddle-pocket in which it was placed before I mounted.

We rode out by the Jaffa Gate, north through the olive grove, then obliquely across the Valley of Jehoshaphat to the Anata road, (Anathoth road,) which lies over the eastern brow of the Scopus. Stopping a moment to enjoy once more the view of the Dead Sea and the plain of the Jordan, and the smell of the aromatic plants with which these breezy heights are covered, we cantered along the windings of a lonely valley, leaving a small village down in a hollow to our right. On the way we occasionally met long files of camels, laden with rough-hewn stone from the quarries of Anathoth, for our church; and their peasant drivers were familiar with English faces, and English wages too, and were more civil than their rough looks might have led one to suppose.

The village is situated (like almost all villages in Palestine) on a little eminence. We rode into it, to the great astonishment of the dogs, donkeys, and half-clad children. A curious assemblage of huts it is: the greater part built of stone, to be sure, but with low doors, rarely a hole for a window—dark, suffocating-looking abodes; and the narrow lanes were one mass of fire dust and dunghills, on the largest of which sat or lay two or three men, one of whom seemed to be the

sheikh. They were smoking and talking with some wild-looking men, visitors from the farther East. Here and there an old crone peeped out from one of the hovels to look after us, or to see that her child did not get under the horses' feet. The women were dressed in the universal blue gown, but old and faded; a dirty cloth served instead of the fringed veil of the Bethlehem women; but around their smoke-dried visages a close row of silver coin was ranged, helmet-fashion; and several of them had rude silver bracelets on their wrists. We were glad to escape from the dust and disagreeable smell which is peculiar to these villages, arising chiefly from the fuel they burn, and made our way to the quarry. Here, amid piles of broken fragments, were about a dozen swarthy workmen, some drilling holes in the rock, and some rough-hewing the blocks of dazzling whiteness.

"What if Jeremiah had foreseen the use to which the beautiful stone of his native village was to be put in the latter days!"

"But he has distinctly prophesied the rebuilding of Jerusalem in the days when men should buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places round about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the South. 'For I will cause their captivity to return, saith the Lord.'"* Walter quoted this verse, and then added—"I wonder if we shall see those silent environs of Jerusalem once more

* Jeremiah xxxii. 44.

enlivened with the hum of workmen, and the sight of suburban houses and gardens. The city itself is certainly beginning to emerge from her long torpor. Why should not this extend beyond the walls?"

"I am afraid we shall not be here long enough for that, brother. How wonderful it would be to *see* ancient prophecies fulfilled before our eyes! But I should regret the delightful quiet which now reigns around Jerusalem. Once beyond the walls, the solitude is complète, except just at the Jaffa Gate, in the early morning or in the evening, when the Europeans are returning home from their walks and rides. I do so enjoy that perfect stillness!"

"So do I, but it is unnatural near a great city, and one cannot desire that it should remain so. I feel as if we should see the change, Emily."

"Well, I should rejoice in it; but how many years do you mean to stay here, if that is the case? Not that I wish to leave Jerusalem; I am becoming daily more attached to it—rooted, as it were."

"I don't think very many years would be necessary. The first dawning is already begun; and when once things do begin to move in the East, progress will be rapid. There will be no long twilight in these Oriental skies. A glorious daylight will soon follow the first blush of rising morn.* But I am forgetting. Look there, Emily, at the beautiful view before you—the mountains and cities of Benjamin. We must be able

* The change has come already. There is now a large suburb of new buildings outside the Jaffa Gate.

to see almost the whole tribe from thence. I wish we knew the names of all those glittering villages."

"How beautifully they come out in the light of the setting sun against the blue and purple hills! We must get Mr Andersen to come here some day, and tell us all their names. And now for a canter home."

Mr Andersen did accompany us on this ride a few weeks afterwards, and pointed out Gibeah, Michmash, Bethel, Rimmon, Beeroth, Ramah,—in fact, almost all the cities of the tribe of Benjamin; and Walter and I agreed that to search for traces of the rest would be a delightful object for our future rides, and then some other day we might take the tribe of Judah in hand, and endeavour to trace its boundaries and its cities. But that would be a much greater task, for Judah had a royal portion, both in extent and position.

On approaching Jerusalem, we met a train of persons accompanying some Oriental lady of distinction into the city. There was a flying escort of irregular horse, preceded by a man dressed somewhat like a buffoon, with high conical cap, and a pair of little kettle-drums hung at his saddle-bow, which he belaboured lustily with leather thongs. The soldiers, in no kind of uniform, but each dressed as he pleased or could afford, were mounted upon fiery horses, which they galloped up and down, and wheeled round, or suddenly reined in,—some shaking long plumed lances, others firing off their muskets, or even blunderbusses, at random in the air, anywhere; and the whizzing of the bullets around us was not very agreeable.

A large company of effendis, in their white turbans and clothes of light-gray colours, rode rather more soberly—at least, they only encouraged their horses to prance and curvet and shake their fringed trappings of crimson or yellow, and rattle the silver ornaments which depended on their foreheads.

Finally, came on foot, about half-a-dozen of the police of the city—sorry-looking, half-starved, and disreputable—carrying slender wands. These were immediately preceding three or four covered litters, borne each between two mules. The last of these containing the great person, was curtained with crimson silk in such a manner that not a glimpse could be obtained of the lady within, who was none other than the Pasha's wife. She had hitherto lived at Jaffa, and was now come to take up her abode at the seraglio. This, then, was the very strong-minded personage of whom we had heard so many funny stories during the last two months, who kept every one about her in terror, and, according to all report, was very independent of her lord the Pasha.

It was said that, during her residence at Jaffa, and while her husband was busy at Hebron earning the laurels of victory, she was governing the seaport town in her own fashion, and levying dues and taxes on behalf of her own pocket, which the poor merchants had nothing to do but to pay. One story was current of her having summoned some dancing women to sing and play before her, at her country house, amid the orange gardens. The principal dancer wore valuable jewels;

and a diamond necklace in particular attracted the attention of the Pashaess, who desired the woman to give it to her. She refused, saying, "I come here to receive gifts from your Excellency. It is proper for you to give me diamonds, not I to your Honour. I am but a poor woman, and live by my trade."

But the great lady was not to be turned from her purpose, and, at last, finding that the woman had no idea of yielding up her diamonds, endeavoured to snatch them from her neck. A scuffle ensued. The dancer was strong and vigorous, but she was vanquished at last, and the necklace wrenched from her by the stronger grasp of the Pasha's wife! Another comical story was told of the manner in which this lady replenished her coffers.

The merchants of Jaffa deal largely in rice, which they import from Damietta for the markets of Jerusalem, Nablous, &c. One morning the lady sent round a requisition for so many baskets of rice to each of the merchants, which were accordingly delivered up to her. She then pressed a sufficient number of camels into service, and sent the rice to the merchants of Jerusalem, a certain number to each, desiring them to remit her the price which she had herself fixed upon them. But it so happened that her spouse, the Pasha, in ignorance of his wife's enterprising speculation, had the week before issued a proclamation fixing the price at which all provisions were to be sold in the Jerusalem market, under pain of fine and imprisonment, and the price at which rice in particular was ordered to be sold

was under the price demanded by the Pashaess for her baskets of rice. What was to be done? The merchants went up in a body to consult his Excellency about the dilemna in which they were placed—on the one hand, certain loss if they bought the rice; and, on the other, all the risks, pains, and penalties which were likely to be incurred if they disobliged their illustrious patroness at Jaffa. I believe the Pasha indemnified them by himself paying them the sum they would lose by buying his wife's baskets of rice; but whether she paid the original merchants of Jaffa we never heard, and it is highly improbable that she did.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE NINTH DAY OF AB—JERUSALEM FROM OLIVET.

NEXT day I was on my way to give Rachel her English lesson, when I met our Consul escorting the Greek Patriarch, with considerable state, to visit our new church—the shape of which was now becoming very easy to distinguish; indeed, the walls were about half way up, and the great wooden frames in their places, for building the Gothic arches of the chancel and transepts.

First came the Patriarch's kawasses; then those of the Consul, in scarlet and gold; next a Greek deacon; then another bearing the patriarchal staff of ebony, with a gold head, on which was a circle of jewels; then

the Patriarch and the Consul and the Metropolitan Bishop of the Greeks—commonly called the Fire Bishop, because he officiates at the ceremonial of Holy Fire at Easter. Then came the Patriarch's secretary, dragoman, and physician; the English dragoman; and a train of Greek monks, both priests and deacons. Mary told me that they were much pleased with our church, and agreeably surprised to find it properly placed east and west.

On returning home, I found Walter full of some English news just arrived from Beyrout. The Peel Ministry was out! How very odd it sounded! I found I had lost the taste for European politics; and indeed my brother was far less moved by the great event than he would have been six months before. We seemed to have been transplanted into another world; but our minds were scarcely less actively engaged, or our time less occupied, than would have been the case in busy, bustling England.

Sundays appeared to come round with wonderful rapidity, and the week to be all too short for the multifarious tasks which had to be compressed within the six working days.

We found that, however unintentionally, we were obliged in some sort to regard the Jewish Sabbath. Our baker would, of course, bring us no bread on that day. Sarah could not come either for her own work or to be painted. Neither tinman nor glazier, nor shoemaker nor tailor, could be had on Saturday, for they were all Jews who practised these trades, and

many others, in European fashion; so that it was necessary to think beforehand, on the Friday, if anything were wanting which must be done by Jews. Our Saturdays were thus rendered quiet, and became leisure days; and we found this was the case in the other English families in Jerusalem, as well as in our house.

I always enjoyed the quiet of these Saturdays; they seemed a sort of half-way resting-place between the bustle of the week and the repose of Sunday.

The Sunday itself was only disturbed by the early morning market. In going to church, we always avoided the Moslem bazaars; and in the streets the shops were mostly shut. Even some which belonged to Jews or Moslems were closed, because, being Sunday, there was not much business to be done.

This was particularly remarkable in the Castle Square. As soon as the morning vegetable market was over, the quiet was almost as great as it would have been in an English public place on Sunday.

The services in our chapel were sometimes entirely conducted by Hebrew clergymen—a priest and a deacon—ministering to a congregation, more than the half of which was gathered from their nation. One Sunday in August we observed that Rabbi Abraham was wearing black; and another Jewish member of the congregation wore a black coat over his Oriental dress, and had a black tassel in his turban.

This was on account of to-day being the double anniversary of the destruction of the temple—the ninth

day of Ab, on which day Nebuchadnezzar and afterwards the Romans destroyed the temple.

It struck us much; and here once again the events of two, and almost three thousand years ago, were brought home to us in a manner that one can have no idea of in any other place.

Rabbi Abraham walked with us in the afternoon to the Mount of Olives; and there, sitting under my favourite tree, we looked down upon the temple ground, and talked about the last days of the two holy and beautiful houses which had once crowned the sacred mountain.

Could Solomon have imagined the melancholy end of all his costly offerings, and of all his works of matchless skill? Surely he must have thought that his glorious temple was to be the centre of devotion for the people of Israel so long as the world should last! He appears to have contemplated everything but this —distress, plague, banishment into captivity, the being in bondage to their enemies; but never that the sins of his people should bring down destruction on the beautiful house itself.

So it was with the nation. They seemed unable to believe, even after it had occurred once already, that God would permit the desolation of the temple, until ruin had actually overtaken both it and them.

Rabbi Abraham told us that the scenes in the synagogues on this day are most heart-rending. The book of the law is robed in black; and the last year's black covering is burnt to ashes, with which ashes the people mark themselves on the forehead, to bind themselves

the more to the law, even in the most adverse circumstances.

It was impossible to look down upon the densely crowded houses of Zion without the deepest emotion. We were looking across the scene of the destruction to the scene of sorrow. There, at this very moment, were thousands of people, old and young—men, women, and children—mourning and fasting over the calamities which had befallen their nation; for all, without exception, observe the fast, from sunset of the previous day until sunset of that evening. They taste neither food nor water; and no Jew wears shoes, even in the streets, till the fast is over, nor do they put on their phylacteries or veil in the synagogue.

Was the hot sun of August shining over the city on those memorable days, as at this moment? Why not? Of course it was summer then as now.

Perchance the great king Nebuchadnezzar* stood not far off from this very spot where we were now sitting, to watch the success of the great effort which at last gave the city to his victorious soldiers.

These hills and rocks had echoed back the war-cry of the Chaldean, as well as of the Roman legions; and the rays of yon setting sun had been reflected back from the armour of the Assyrians, as well as from the Italian eagles. The one destruction had come from the north, the other from the west; and the fury of both had broken and spent itself upon the devoted city at our feet, and reduced the magnificence of the holiest place to a heap of smoking ashes.

* 2 Kings xxv. 1; Ezek. xxiv. 1.

We all forgot to talk: the silence that reigned around seemed enhanced by the brilliant sunshine which was poured upon Jerusalem, and was reflected back from the marble pavement around the mosque. At length Abraham asked of my brother—

"Do you think she will ever be restored?"

"Jerusalem, the Holy City? Yes, surely."

"I think so, for I cannot understand God's Word in any other way; but I was speaking with Mrs —— yesterday, and she said, 'Oh no! you Jews must not think of Jerusalem any more; the Bible only means that the Christian Church will be built up.' And indeed, sir, this is the first year that I have not kept the fast with my people; and to-day I *could* not eat—I could only weep, and think if that is true what she said; and I wanted to go and ask Mr Andersen if all the Christians think so; but it is Sunday, and I have been afraid to disturb him."

"Some Christians think as Mrs —— said. But there are many, and I have no doubt Mr Andersen is one, who believe that, just as God has fulfilled what He said in punishing your nation and destroying Jerusalem, so He will fulfil His promises, and restore them both."

"Is it not beginning?" I said. "Look at your beautiful Hebrew church over there. When, since the temple was destroyed, could any one, standing on this Mount of Olives, behold a house of prayer like that belonging to your nation?* and there it is being built up

* The Jews have built a handsome Synagogue on Mount Zion since the time when the above was said.

for you by a people who have come as great a distance to build, as either Chaldean or Roman came to destroy. Is it not true, as it never was true since the ashes grew cold on the temple and the altar, that the servants of God take pleasure in the stones of Zion? Therefore the time to favour Zion is come."

"Oh! my dear lady," exclaimed poor Abraham, the tears gathering in his eyes, "you have comforted me."

Walter took up the word: "'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.'"

"Yes, sir. You do not know that our nation call the rest of this month, the month of comfort—Menachem-Ab—because they believe that God will comfort Zion after her sorrows. 'Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.'"

We walked quietly home, and reached our door just as the first stars began to appear. The Jewish fast of Tisha b'av was over.

CHAPTER XXX.

CAPTURE OF ABOO GOSH—MILITARY SPECTACLE.

STRANGE rumours were current in Jerusalem during the following ten days. People said that Aboo Gosh, the renowned sheikh and robber-chief, who had been

the terror and dread of passers-by on the Jaffa road, had been taken prisoner by the Pasha. Sixteen other chieftains from the south had also been seized, and, with Aboo Gosh and a son of one of the principal effendis of Jerusalem, had been sent on board ship at Jaffa on their way to Constantinople. The people of Aboo Gosh's village had risen up in arms, and taken possession of the high road. Some said the road to Jaffa was unsafe, that a poor Jewish traveller had nearly been murdered. The wives and children of Aboo Gosh, struck with panic, had fled into other districts. No, not so, said others; the Aboo Gosh peasantry have so laid hold of the road that the Pasha and his troops, now at Ramleh, will be unable to return to the city, and it will be as it was ten years ago, when troops were sent up to protect the city in the commotion caused by Aboo Gosh and his followers murdering on the highway two rival chieftains—the governors of Lydda and Ramleh—on their way to visit the Pasha at Jerusalem for the feast. The troops going to protect the city were obliged to obtain permission to pass, as well as an escort from Aboo Gosh himself!

Abderrahhmân of Hebron, to instal whom the late war was undertaken by the Pasha, was now reported dead at Jaffa, after a fortnight's illness. His two brothers, among the vanquished in that war, were among the prisoners going to Constantinople. These, and a thousand equally confused and contradictory reports of danger, anarchy, civil war, and terror, flew

about the city, and matters went so far that some of the Europeans were afraid to take their customary walks and rides without the walls.

However, we walked and rode as usual, and saw no reason for doing otherwise. The peasantry we met were as civil as ever; and in a day or two all fears and doubts were set at rest by the sudden arrival of the Pasha at the head of his troops, colours flying, drums, fifes, and trumpets playing, and the roofs of the houses thronged to see him enter. At the moment of his passing the gates, the red flag was raised over the Castle of David, and the embrasures flashed and smoked with cannon;—not very regularly fired, but they had a fine effect, and the reverberation over the Mount of Olives and down the deep valleys was most grand.

In the evening, until a late hour, the drums, fifes, and trumpets were incessantly heard,—for the little army was encamped beyond the walls on the western side of the city. At about eight o'clock a single cannon was fired, and made all quiet for the night.

It was supposed that the Pasha intended to pounce upon the village of Aboo Gosh during the night. The effendis of Jerusalem were greatly alarmed at the unexpected arrival of his Excellency. Besides nine sheikhs of villages whom he brought with him as prisoners and trophies of his grand doings, the Pasha had with him as hostages the overseeing sheikh of a very large district north-west of Jerusalem, and also the notorious Abderrahhmân of Hebron, who, accord-

ing to report, had died at Jaffa only a few days before.

The true history of the taking of Aboo Gosh now became known as follows. The Pasha despaired of taking by force a chief so well known and so much dreaded, and who could muster many hundred fighting men under his standard.

His alliances, both with other powerful sheikhs of South Palestine and with certain of the Bedawy tribes, would have more than doubled his army; and, like all the rural chieftains, he had firm friends and allies among the effendis within the city, who both could and would assist him with money at least, in levying sums from the convents for allowing their Easter pilgrims to pass along his territory, and who were able to aid him by their influence in the council chamber, where the affairs of Jerusalem and the country districts were governed and settled; or rather unsettled, by these intriguing, covetous men.

With genuine Turkish tact his Excellency had treated the great sheikh, Aboo Gosh, with distinction, and invited him to assist by his presence at the subjugation of Hebron in favour of his ally Abderrahhmân. Accordingly, the sheikh accompanied the Pasha in that expedition, and shared its glories at the head of a numerous train of his own people. Aboo Gosh was not the only person thus honoured. His friend and ally in Jerusalem, son of one of the proudest and most powerful of the effendis, was also invited and came.

The Pasha and his army and his friends, after set-

tling Hebron, then went southwards, and purified the districts of Hebron and Gaza. Overgrown sheikhs were pounced upon and led in triumph as trophies by the victorious army. Others less dangerous were allowed to purchase respite, if not immunity, by free-will offerings from their treasured hoards, or forced levies upon their people. Fearful examples were made of the unfortunate peasantry who were found carrying arms after a certain day fixed by the Pasha; and others, unable or unwilling to pay up the long-standing arrears of their taxes, were punished with extraordinary severity. At one place, in the plains of the south, some of these culprits were detained in the open air, under the burning Syrian sun, from sunrise to sunset without food and without water, and in a species of torture, their arms being kept forcibly stretched out during the whole time.

All these vigorous measures raised the Pasha's name, for the time at least, to a level with that of the never-to-be-forgotten Ibrahim Pasha, to this day hated, feared, and admired by the population whom he governed with a rod of iron.

Aboo Gosh was all this time treated with the greatest honour; robes of state were put upon his shoulders. He was constantly admitted to the Pasha's presence and to his table; in fact, indispensable to his Excellency's happiness. Towards the close of the brilliant campaign the army was returning from the Philistine country to Jerusalem, *viâ* Jaffa and Ramleh.

One evening the tents were pitched on the borders

of the plain, and at the mouth of the pass leading through the Aboo Gosh district. The next morning would, after a few hours' march, see the sheikh doing all the honours of his village to his illustrious patron, in anticipation of which joyful event the followers were sent on to prepare, while the sheikh and his friend once more dined alone with his Excellency, when the tent was silently surrounded with soldiers, (barefoot, to ensure success,) and at a signal an officer entered with drawn sword, exclaiming, "Where are those two infidels?". Aboo Gosh and his friend, the effendi, were seized, handcuffed, and mounted on horseback; their legs tied beneath the animals to prevent the possibility of escape, and then and there marched off to Jaffa by night, before a syllable of information could be sent to their adherents, or the war-cry be raised among the mountaineers. Within sight of Jaffa they were dismounted, and their legs fettered with wooden logs. The Pasha rode back to Jaffa, and himself superintended their embarkation for Constantinople, and then, although the Aboo Gosh faction had taken up arms, his Excellency marched with flying colours through their district at the head of his army.

They were cowed; the whole country rang with his praise, and poor Aboo Gosh and his friend consoled themselves by practising the cardinal virtue of Islam —resignation—on board their ship of exile; and hoping (as what Arab will not?) that gold or destiny, or both, would yet restore them to their hereditary state and consequence.

This was the story of Aboo Gosh, as gleaned by Walter and myself from various sources, and corrected until it was reduced to truthful proportions.

One evening we were walking on the west of the city, in a place where a pretty view was obtained of the encampment. The long, regular lines of light-green tents had a charming effect. At a distance were the gayer pavilions of the Pasha and his staff.

We met our Consul, who had been paying his Excellency a state visit. While we stopped to chat with him, there passed us one of the rabbis of the Polish Jews, also preceded by a kawass. He held an appointment as consular agent for Russia and Austria, most of his brethren being Russian or Austrian subjects. How odd it looked to see the armed Oriental and his silver stick before the rabbi in Jewish robes and furred cap, with face bearing many a mark of midnight watching and study.

Presently there came a more numerous train—all the Spanish rabbis surrounding their venerable chief, the First in Zion. He was aged, and his beard of snowy whiteness; yet his countenance retained its quick, sharp glance, and his gait both firmness and dignity. A most striking group they formed—the old man, occupying the highest Jewish post of honour in the whole world, and his handsome, haughty attendants, members of the Supreme Council of Jewish Law, learned men of most ancient descent—going on foot to visit and congratulate the Turkish ruler of their land, a young man of no ancient family, and unlearned in

aught but the art of—shall it be called government? They saluted the Consul with much respect, and swept on their way.

Mr Wells invited my brother to accompany him the next day but one, when the Pasha was going to hold a grand review and military ceremony, at which all the grandees of Jerusalem were to be present.

This was an offer not to be refused. At the appointed hour he mounted his horse, and set off to join the Consul; but as the morning was very hot, I fortified his head by putting two or three white handkerchiefs folded under his hat to keep off the sun. The heat of Jerusalem summer we had by this time found was by no means very oppressive, for there was almost always a fresh breeze from the north-west, and the nights were sometimes even cold. But it was always necessary to protect the head against the sun, for sunstrokes were not uncommon, and were often very dangerous. A lady of my acquaintance, who had forgotten to put a handkerchief over her head in crossing the terrace from one room to another, was struck down senseless in a moment; and I observed that half the agues caught by Europeans were traceable to having gone out in the sun with insufficient covering on the head.

I give the history of what he saw in Walter's own words:—

"There were people of all kinds, in their many-coloured Oriental dresses, flocking to see the sight, and hosts of white-sheeted women also. In front of the

camp were posted the two brass cannon lately employed in the expedition to Hebron, very small and highly polished. We entered the Pasha's tent, which was very Oriental in the simplicity of its arrangements. There were mats on the floor, and cushions in a semicircle, to form a divan. Sherbets and pipes were served.

"The colonel of the troops and the regimental doctor were both in regimental costume. The kâdi and effendis of rank were seated beside the Pasha, dressed in the same style—only the kâdi wore a fillet of gold lace passed among the snowy folds of his turban. His features were almost effeminate, and so was the soft manner in which he spoke Turkish.

"I had never before heard that language spoken, and was much struck by the contrast between it and the sonorous Arabic. It seemed to consist almost entirely of unaccented monosyllables; to have no gutturals; but, instead, abundance of finesse.

"A wretched idiot—sacred, according to Moslem superstition—walked in, and seated himself at the Pasha's feet. He wore a mere shirt of sacking; hair shorn close; and no covering to head or feet. But there he was allowed to stay, in all his wretchedness.

"In a circle before the Pasha were arranged, besides effendis, deputations from various communities—Jewish elders, dragomans from the convents, all sitting on their heels in most respectful silence, with hands folded before them, some smoking chibouques brought by their own servants. Now and then a few words of

gentle conversation were uttered by one, then a few by another, and the Pasha occasionally addressed a sentence to some person. Near us sat the Prussian, French, and Sardinian Consuls and their officials.

"The Pasha told them of the alarm made last night in the camp by the fellahhin of Aboo Gosh, who came shouting and firing over the hills, having been falsely informed of their chief being released, and were come out to welcome him home.

"While he was speaking, there entered Abderrahhmân of Hebron, with two young sons, and took a place on his heels at the farthest end. He ordered his boys to advance and make their salutation. They each kissed the hand of the kâdi; but the Pasha not offering his, they made their salaam instead.

"Some bantering ensued between his Excellency and the smallest of these boys about pistols, to which the child answered with sufficient self-confidence. He appeared to be about five or six years of age. It appears that, when Hebron was taken, he had asked the Pasha for some pistols to fight with against his uncle, and said, 'Now my father is growing old, I expect you will make me the sheikh; neither of my brothers will do!' This tale the Pasha repeated in French in the boy's presence. His father, a ruffianly-looking, powerful man, listened, with savage delight glowing in his eyes.

"Soon after entered another sheikh, the greatest between this and Nabloûs. Although here as a sort of hostage, he was very well received by the company.

The Hebron worthy wore a scarlet and yellow silk handkerchief round his tarboosh; but this man had a voluminous turban of white, figured with amber silk. He was tall, very cleanly in appearance, and far above the coarse brutality which appeared in every gesture of the other.

"We were informed that the ceremony about to take place was the dismissal of various companies of the soldiery whose five years' term of service was expired, and the substitution of fresh recruits, besides an inspection of the regiments.

"The Inspector-General, one Ibrahim Pasha, came from the city with a great banner of green silk, inscribed with the first chapter of the Koran, and escorted by music. Trays, covered with coloured gauze, were carried by subaltern officers; they contained certificates of good conduct to be given to the soldiers, which were distributed as the soldiers passed in front of the tent.

"Then came the dismissal—the Inspector holding up the corner of the great banner for each soldier to salute in Oriental fashion as they were marched past, by raising it three times to his lips and forehead. Two of the men chose to remain in service.

"After this three sheep were brought forward, from the rear of the band, by men in striped dresses and green caps. They were soldiers—one from each of the discharged companies—about to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, the meat of which was to be given to the poor.

"Each man placed his sheep on the ground at his feet, with their faces turned towards Mecca. After a roll of the drums in the centre, the kiatib (scribe) of the kâdi recited the fathhah and the Moslem confession of faith—the whole line, as well as the officers and the Pasha, with the bystanders, repeating it also, sentence by sentence, with their hands held out before them, as if reading from books.

"Then the slaughterers bound the legs of the sheep with their own black leather girdles, and drew their knives. The kiatib of the regiment recited a litany, to each sentence of which the troops and every Moslem present replied 'Amen,' with grand effect. It was chiefly for the Sultan; and one of its prayers was for his victory over all infidels and enemies.

"The throats of the sheep were then cut, and, while the blood was flowing, the band played, and four brass guns fired, with noble echoes among the mountains.

"Then came the termination of every military affair, and of every day's business in the barracks—the playing of that tune, the first few bars of which are like our 'God save the Queen.' Then the commanding officer recited several sentences, to each of which the troops replied by a loud hurrah!

"And thus here, in Jerusalem, I saw the soldiers offer sacrifices of thanksgiving for release from military service; and everybody went their several ways.

"Most of the effendis had horses and grooms in attendance; and very pretty it was to see the well-fed animals in their gay trappings—the Oriental saddle-

cloths fringed round, and embroidered in gold and silver, or ornamented with the double triangle or Solomon's seal.

"As the people were leaving the ground, a man, showily dressed in gold embroidery, and galloping a fiery horse, almost rode over a white-sheeted Jewess. Her husband caught the bridle of the horse just in time, on which the rider struck him a violent blow with a coorbaj, and would have struck another had not the Jew darted aside. He was a villainous-looking fellow, and cursed the Jew awfully; then spurred his horse, and dashed at full gallop along the road, endangering the lives of women and children. The Jew was Gershon, our Sarah's son-in-law. He said he was afraid to go to his Consul for redress, because this man is the chief of the police, and would be sure to revenge himself.

"I am glad I went to-day; it was a very animated spectacle. One thing struck me—the perfect taste with which the Orientals assort the colours of their dress. Amid all the immense variety of gay clothing that I saw to-day, there was not a single instance of bad taste. Green was faced with crimson or orange; scarlet and black were put together; a man with a blue jacket would wear a yellow silk vest, or an orange-coloured robe over white silk.

"Light and delicate colours were chiefly worn by the effendis, and were in perfect keeping with their scrupulous cleanliness and pure snowy turbans.

"The glorious sunshine enhanced and intensified all.

My eyes had a rare feast on colours; and I was strongly reminded of Mr Manson in England, who used to say, 'What a pity it is that people have left off wearing decided colours, such as our grandmothers wore! Then it used to be a scarlet cloak; a blue hat, or a green hat, or a black hat; or a brown, or blue, or yellow gown: and the same with the men; their coats were purple, or blue, or green, or brown. But now the only colours you hear spoken of or see in the streets are something of a gray and something of a fawn colour, or something of a slate colour and something of a drab; or something of a blue and something of a yellow, which make something of a green; or something of a crimson and something of a gray, to make something of a purple; and you see the result wherever there is a crowd assembled. There are no colours —no contrasts or harmonies—all is "something" of a dirt colour!'"

CHAPTER XXXI.

FAST AND FEASTS—AGUE.

ONE morning Constantine came and told me that he must go to market earlier than usual, and buy for next day, as well as for to-day, because next day there would be nothing to be got in the bazaar. "Because, O lady,

to-morrow is the first day of Ramadan, and the Moslems will buy up all the meat for the feast."

And so it was. Walter and I went through the bazaar early next day, and there was extraordinary activity in their crowded thoroughfares; men-slaves, and women-slaves, and soldiers, and even peasantry from the villages, were buying up provisions. An immense number of sheep appeared to have been killed expressly for the occasion—mutton and meat being equivalent terms in Jerusalem. Beef is neither sold nor wished for by Orientals, for neither calves nor oxen are ever fattened for market; and the specimen of beef afforded by the miserable joints of some poor cow, too old to plough any longer, naturally gives folk the idea that beef is indigestible.

Occasionally one sees exposed for sale a portion or so of camel's flesh, slaughtered under much the same circumstances, and as different from the juicy flesh or fat hump of a desert-fed camel set before the guest in a Bedawy camp, as Arab peasants' beef may be from an English Christmas joint. At least so we were told by those who frequent Bedawy society; but I have never yet tried camel's flesh in any circumstances.

My servant sometimes brought me a joint of goat's flesh; but I soon learnt to distinguish that from mutton, and banished it peremptorily from our table —unless it was very young kid, which is like young lamb.

The mutton is usually excellent in flavour; and, when a sheep has been fattened some time, the joints

are both fat and large. Legs of mutton, home-fed in this way, would do credit to any English farmer. One day we were dining at a friend's, and the servant being a Moslem, at first refused to touch the dish on which a leg of mutton lay,—thinking from its size and fatness, that it must be pork.

The most curious part of a Jerusalem sheep is the tail, which is entirely composed of a fine delicate fat, used in all sorts of cookery; it more resembles butter than fat. I have seen a tail which weighed twenty-seven pounds. Rabbi Abraham told us that this is the part meant in such passages as Lev. iii. 9, by "the rump;" the Hebrew word being the same as that we use every day in Arabic for the tail—"Liyeh." In that particular verse it must be so, for there is an "and" inserted in italics which need not be there. Leaving it out, the words run, (speaking of the sacrifice to be offered,) "The fat thereof, (and) the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the back-bone." Now, that is exactly how the tail is separated from the joint —hard by the back-bone. The Jews were not allowed to eat any of this fat, which was set apart for sacrificial purposes, (Lev. iii. 17; 1 Sam. ii. 15, 16.)

The Arabs, however, have no such scruple; and, in the camp as well as in the city, when a sheep is roasted whole in honour of a guest, the portion to which the tail is attached is reserved as the best piece for the chief guest; and a very delicate morsel it is.

But I have forgotten the bazaars on the day before Ramadan. The peasantry were not only purchasing

food—*i.e.*, rice and fruit—for their feast, but most of them had a pair of new red morocco shoes dangling in his hand; and some had shoes of all sizes for their children, from two years old and upwards; for, to an Arab peasant or his child, a smart pair of new red shoes gives as much pleasure as would be given to an English girl by a new ribbon for her bonnet.

But for the fruit—I never saw anything like the quantity of fruit. There were mountains of water-melons and of grapes. It was curious to observe the difference of choice: the town slaves bought of both. But the peasants who had brought the grapes from their own vineyards chose water-melons, as being the produce of other districts. Though every man seemed to be carrying away a water-melon, the heaps did not look diminished. The size of this immense fruit varied from about eight pounds weight to thirty or forty. Besides these, and the piles and piles of beautiful grapes, the stalls were furnished, in equal proportion, with green and purple figs, scarlet tomatoes, cucumbers, and purple egg-plants, with other vegetables that I did not know.

Any one looking at the landscape around Jerusalem, and the empty waste mountains around, would ask where it had all come from. But we had been in the habit of going out in the early morning, and of meeting the files of peasant women bearing on their heads basket-loads of vegetables; and had seen, in the course of our evening rides, the nooks down in the valleys whence such produce comes, and the vineyards on the hill-sides

around the same villages, whence the grapes come which were brought in every morning by the men on countless donkeys. And as for the melons, long trains of camels might be seen at sunset entering the Jaffa Gate, bearing them in coarse nets of palm-fibre from the melon-grounds of Nablous and Ramleh—that is, from the plains of Shechem and of Sharon.

At the afternoon hour of prayer, seven guns from the castle announced that all true believers were to prepare for commencing their fast at daybreak on the morrow.

The din throughout the night was great. In every house there appeared to be feasting and rejoicing, lights and music—which latter consisted of singing, clapping of hands, and the incessant beating of small kettle-drums and tambourines; and the muezzin proclaimed prayer from the minarets once or twice during the course of the night.

From my terrace we could see that all the minarets were illuminated by double rows of lamps round the gallery, and the mosques showed a blaze of light through their windows. It was strange to see and hear the rejoicings of this Moslem festival in the Holy City; and yet more strange, when rockets were thrown up from the temple enclosure, to see them rise and fall and explode amid scenes which, in our minds, were inseparably connected with associations of deepest solemnity. When they exploded, and the echoes ran round the hills, it seemed profanation to think of Moriah and Zion echoing the crack of rockets.

But it was far worse to behold, as we did on raising our eyes in that direction, the illumination for the Moslem festival on the highest point of the Mount of Olives. This shocked us deeply.

Rest was almost impossible that night; and quiet was only restored when, at the commencement of dawn, a single gun from the castle announced that the fast had begun—as soon as there was sufficient light to enable a person to distinguish a black thread from a white one. It was, in fact, still dark; and the stars were shining when the gun fired and announced the moment after which no one might eat, or drink even water, or smoke, until gun-fire at sunset allows the festivities to be resumed. At early gun-fire, a good meal having been previously eaten, all go to sleep—the rich for the greater part of the day, and the poor until the rising sun calls them forth to their toil.

I was reminded it was Ramadan when our groom, Haj Omar, came for the daily allowance of chopped straw and barley for the horses. Instead of his usual good-humoured manners, he was stupid and sulky, not having refreshed himself with his cup of coffee or his dearly-loved pipe. A tiny coffee-pot and his pipe were his inseparable companions and constant comforters, and now he could resort to neither. Poor fellow! I pitied him through the long hours of the summer day, and once or twice saw him actually carrying the empty pipe in his hand from habit. But it was only carried; the bowl was empty; and when, during the day, I required some of the little services he was accustomed to

render, I had not the heart to waken him up, as he sat under the shade of the elder-tree, near the kitchen-door, forgetting in a nap the miseries of the fast from tobacco and coffee. In truth, he ate very little at any time, but these two were to him both food and drink.

Worse still was the fate of the poor creatures who were obliged to labour as usual, through the heat of the long day, and dared not refresh themselves with a draught of water. In going through the bazaars and streets, one saw many a weary, distressed face, and there was perpetual squabbling going on. The most good-natured became cross, and would, after a burst of ill-humour, exclaim, "Is it not Ramadan? who minds what people say in Ramadan?"—and the ill-natured became furious and dangerous. No Christian or Jew would have any dealings that he could possibly avoid with a Moslem during Ramadan, and in consequence almost all business was suspended, and the bazaars deserted. Even the seraglio was closed; the Pasha invisible; the military authorities asleep; and the kâdi and all the law-officers asleep also. No government was exercised, and no justice dispensed. The few who crept about the streets had a forlorn air, which one could not help pitying.

As the sun declined towards evening, symptoms of reviving life began to appear. Shopkeepers opened and arranged their shops; lamps were trimmed and filled with oil; fires were lit; water drawn from the wells; cooking commenced; and the rich, who had been sleeping all day, rode forth on their capering

horses, to get a keener appetite for the evening feast.

Haj Omar could now prepare his wee cup of coffee; put an extra quantity of coffee into the little pot, for a *good* cup; and finally, as the sunshine began to disappear from the lower courts, and rest only on the minarets, he would set his pot simmering. Then, when only the highest pinnacles reflected back the last ruddy rays, he would put a live coal on his pipe, and stand waiting—a curious picture of patient obedience—until the welcome sound of the cannon reached his ear. In an instant the pipe was in his mouth, and all troubles forgotten, as he stood motionless, watching its light blue curls of fragrance. After a few whiffs of perfect enjoyment, he would subside on his heels beside the brazier, where his cup of coffee was now ready, pour it out, and sip that with the highest content. In a short time after these he was ready for his breakfast, for they always call this sunset meal by the name of the one usually eaten in the morning.

One evening we were coming in from our ride a little earlier than usual, for the gates were shut earlier during this month: just within the Jaffa Gate sat the hungry soldiers on their heels, in a circle, all round a huge wooden bowl, containing a mess of rice and other ingredients, hot, smoking, and savoury.

The washing of hands was already done, and there they sat—each man's right hand stretched out over the dish, sleeves tucked up, and awaiting the moment of gun-fire; too intent upon their breakfast to mind us,

who stood by to watch the comical scene. Bang went the gun, and in plunged a dozen hands into the stew! It was clear that any hungry wretch, who had not been ready like the rest, would have got no breakfast; for, as we moved on, we could see the dish rapidly emptying.

The first hour after sunset is a very silent one. Everybody is eating, and can think of nothing else. After that the hum commences; buying and selling begin in the bazaars, (which are all lit up,) especially of provisions for the principal night meal. Coffee-shops are crowded. Reciters of tales and poetry have numerous audiences. The tum-tums are heard in every hareem, and the seraglio is opened for business; the Pasha may be seen; the town-council sits; the kâdi is awake; and applicants for justice—complainants, defendants, and witnesses—may be seen hurrying along with lanterns, to try and get their cause heard before the midnight hours come on, and business is again suspended till next night.

Ramadan is in its high tide as the moon increases to the full, and sheds her pure light over the strange artificial scene. But by the time the month wears to its close, and the waning moon rises later and later, and it becomes difficult to distinguish day-dawn from moon-light, people are languid and weary of the unnatural life; the cross become wicked; the wicked, savage and unapproachable; and it is a relief to everybody when seven guns from the castle proclaim that a new moon has appeared, that Ramadan is over, and the three feast-days of Bairam have commenced.

Everybody visits everybody, and the poorest contrive to wind up the fast by appropriate feasting.

Everybody wears new clothes. Haj Omar, according to the custom of Moslem servants, came before breakfast to kiss our hands and wish us a happy year; or rather, as it runs in Arabic, "May you be in peace all the year."

He had smoked his pipe and drunk his coffee, and was resplendent in scarlet boots, full white trousers, yellow-silk waistcoat, scarlet jacket embroidered in gold, and a silken turban of scarlet and yellow. This was our blue-cotton-clad groom! I scarcely recognised him.

By the by, I have not mentioned that he was not the one we had at first hired, but an older man, and more honest servant, and also an Egyptian.

In the neighbourhood of our house, I had observed sheep tied up at many a door or in many a court. At the fruit or vegetable sellers' in the bazaars were sheep tied up; and the soldiers at the Jaffa Gate had one or two of the fattest, which used, in trying to run after their masters, to wag their huge tails from side to side in the most grotesque fashion. But now all these sheep disappeared. They had been kept for the feast, and the feast had come, and the sheep were eaten up. It is said that a faithful Moslem ought to spend one-third of his income for the year in the festivities of Ramadan.

Certainly Haj Omar must have had this precept in mind when he purchased his Ramadan suit of clothes. Now Ramadan was over, and everybody was glad of it;

and, after three days of feasting, everything returned to the ordinary sober routine of life.

Mary Andersen had not been well of late, and when I next went to the house, I found her on the sofa shivering with ague. She had had several fits, and looked miserably ill.

"What does Dr Baron say?"

"He cannot come to see me. He is in bed with ague himself, but sends me word that we must try change of air. As soon as I am a little better we shall pitch our tents at the Convent of the Cross. Don't be frightened at my looks, I shall soon be better; it 's only the ague," and her teeth chattered as she spoke; "it goes away soon if it is doctored at once, only I have had it so often that I suppose I shan't lose it without change of air."

"You see what is before you, Miss Russell, if you catch ague; so be careful, and avoid it as long as you can," said Mrs Andersen. "Miss Graves has escaped these seven years, and Mrs Smith has never had it at all. But when once it is caught, you are liable to returns of it. Avoid exposure to the sun, going too long without food, over-fatigue, irregular diet; in short, everything which disorders the stomach."

"I think this fit was brought on," added Mary, "by my drinking water after eating grapes. The natives say that always brings on ague; but perhaps I should have had it whether or not."

"Another thing, Miss Russell,—never let a headache

go on to a second day, however slight it may seem. Take a little rhubarb and soda, or seidlitz-powder, or some such simple remedy, and you may keep ague off for years, and perhaps for ever, as it rarely comes on without some warning."

"I cannot understand why there should be agues in Jerusalem. The city stands so high, and the breeze which sweeps over it by day and by night ought to keep it healthy."

"So it doubtless would, but for the countless heaps of rubbish in the streets, and for the malaria which the August and September heat draws from the broken cisterns. If the city were cleansed, we should scarcely have any ague."

"I don't wonder at the Moslems having ague, or anything else, after their fasting and feasting."

"It is the same with the Christians. Um Hannah has just finished the fast of the Virgin, and now that she has begun to eat again she has got ague."

"My servants have also been fasting, but I could not make out what the fast was. However, it was a very rigorous one, for they would touch neither meat, eggs, milk, butter, or even oil of any kind; they actually lived upon fruit, pickles, and bread."

"It was the fast in honour of the assumption of the Virgin. At the end of it all the Christians went down to the Virgin's tomb, near Gethsemane, to keep the feast."

"Helaneh and Constantine told me one evening that they wanted leave to go somewhere, but would be back

in time for breakfast. They came, but late. They were tired, and had apparently had no sleep all night. I had to prepare breakfast myself."

"Very likely they had not slept. Those who can afford it pitch tents out there. The others sleep under the trees for a little while, but the merrymaking and the services in the chapel occupy the greater part of the night."

"How many fasts do they observe in the course of a year?"

"Twelve days in honour of the Virgin, forty days before Christmas, and forty days before Easter, besides two days every week."

"Why, that makes more than half the year!"

"Just so. It is wonderful that they exist at all; and I have no doubt that half the fevers in Jerusalem, at least among the Christians, arise from this cause."

After three days the grand move was made. Five camels carried out tents, bedding, a table, some chairs, and all other absolutely necessary articles; and my next visit to Mary was paid at Mrs Andersen's encampment, in our old haunts at the Convent of the Cross.

Their camp was near the larger one of Mr and Mrs Douglas, who, with their children, had gone out a few weeks earlier. Very pretty the tents looked scattered among the olive trees, and the horses and donkeys picketed at a little distance.

A little rocky amphitheatre was chosen for the afternoon rendezvous, being shaded from the western sun by both the hill-side and the trees.

Mary was already wonderfully better. The change of air had immediately checked the ague fits, and her good looks were returning. I was reminded of my own speedy recovery, as soon as I got into the fresh air.

Mrs Andersen invited my brother and me to come and spend a day in the camp as soon as possible: she would take no denial; therefore, next Friday evening —when the painting of Sarah must needs be at a stand-still—was fixed, in order that we might spend the night there, and enjoy one of the delightful evenings in the country air.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ENGLISH TENT-LIFE—AN ARAB COLLOQUY.

EARLY on Friday afternoon we rode over, and found all our friends together. It was the prettiest scene imaginable. The ladies were seated, some on cushions on the ground, some on rocks, and were working or knitting. Two little girls, the children of Mrs Douglas, were playing with some gazelle hounds. These dogs are more elegant in form than the English greyhound, and have a feathery tail, which adds much to their beauty. The softness of their eye is bewitching.

I had not seen children gambolling since we had been in Jerusalem. The town children don't play in

the open air, and cannot run. It was enchanting to watch them and their pretty playmates tumbling and running among the trees.

The gentlemen had just returned from their day's labours in Jerusalem, and were resting, some stretched on the ground, one reading aloud, and Mr Andersen and our old friend Papas Athanasius were enjoying a pipe and chat in Arabic. The latter took leave, and returned within the walls of the convent immediately after the sun had set.

Very, very delightful was the evening air to us, after being for so many months obliged to hurry within the city gates before sunset. There was no dew, and therefore we lingered in the open air, and watched the full moon rise and shed her soft light over the enchanting scene. The cicala made music in the trees, and conversation was carried on in a low voice, as if the speakers were unwilling to disturb the delicious repose which reigned around. At length a signal was heard, something like the beating of a gong, (but, in truth, the gong was only a tea-tray,) and the families exchanged good-nights and went to their several camps. The children's clear laugh rang in the distance as they ran away to their tents, and the lanterns glanced among the trees, and altogether it was a fairy scene.

We found the tea-table set in what Mary called the dining-room tent; all very simple, but most enjoyable. Before we separted for the night, Mr Andersen read a chapter in the Bible and prayed. Lanterns were then brought for each person. Mary took me into her tent,

and Walter was quartered on a sofa in the dining-room tent. But it was impossible to go to bed immediately: the splendour of the moonlight on the grand old buttresses of the convent, and the black shadows, and the dim half-seen mountains and winding valley, fascinated me, and I stood, looking and enjoying and wondering, until Mary's voice reached me from within the tent.

"Miss Russell! Miss Russell! do you not know that you are trying to catch ague as fast as you can? You must come in; there is some dew falling; I feel it on the curtain of the tent, and you will certainly get a fit if you stay."

Most unwillingly did I obey; but, when the lantern was put out, it was scarcely less delightful to get a glimpse of the stars as the flap of the tent was now and then raised by the light breeze, to feel the air playing over my face, and to hear the twitter of the small owls and the whispering of the branches; and thus I fell asleep.

After some hours I was startled out of a sound sleep by a strange, hideous noise, as of a child crying in utmost distress. All the donkeys began to bray violently. Something stumbled over the ropes of the tent and shook it. The dogs barked, and rushed in the same direction. I heard the running as of an animal closely pursued by the dogs, and the crying became fainter and fainter, while the barking of the dogs, farther and farther down the valley, showed that their chase was likely to be unsuccessful.

When I was fully awake, and able to think, I guessed

that this must have been a hyæna, from the resemblance of its cry to the human voice, and with this conclusion composed myself once more to sleep.

Nothing further occurred until daybreak, when I rose and dressed myself quietly, intending to leave Mary asleep, and wander forth alone to see the sun rise. Walter was leaving his tent for the same purpose, and we took a long ramble together over the hills, and breathed the delicious morning air, fragrant with the perfume of wild thyme growing in profusion all around. We met no living soul, and returned to the tents just in time to see Mr Andersen pass the top of the hill on horseback. He was on his way to early service in Jerusalem. Mrs Andersen and Mary were ready for breakfast, after which we established ourselves on the shady side of two olive-trees which grew close to each other. First there was some sketching to be done. The old convent, the trees and tents in the foreground, formed an irresistible group. Walter, of course, brought out his pencils and paper, and withdrew to another tree a little farther off, that he might include us and our trees in his picture. Mary had a sketch of more detail upon which she was at work. When the sun rose too high, and the shadows were altered and almost gone, needlework was produced, and my brother read to us. The tree-grasshopper (a different kind from those heard in the evening) kept up a vigorous concert of chirping—always on the sunny side of the tree. They began when the sun became hot in the morning. As it passed round to the south

the first chirrupers would cease, and others on that side of the tree take up the chorus; and when the shades of evening fell upon the branches, one by one the grasshoppers became silent. The effect upon the reading was very curious. The chirp of these insects assimilated itself to all the *s's*, being of the same nature of sound, so that the reading appeared to have been deprived entirely of the letter *s*, and was rendered indistinct until one's ear became a little accustomed. Sometimes, when the chirping became too furious, Walter would throw up a little stone among the branches, and this frightened and stopped the creatures; but the silence was of short duration, and our little friends were soon at work as merrily as ever. We tried hard to find one of them, as I wished to see what they were like, but in vain. Though we could hear them seemingly quite close, it was impossible to find one; and we made up our minds that their colour must resemble perfectly the colour of the boughs, and thus aid their concealment.

The day passed quickly away, and the shadows began to lengthen when Mr Andersen returned for dinner, after which we all repaired once more to the romantic drawing-room, and I enjoyed a good game of play with the two fair-haired children and their dogs. One of these, however, was disabled. The animal I had heard in the night was really a hyæna, and the gallant dog in chasing him had outstripped his mates and seized the brute. He paid dear for his bravery, for the hyæna was too strong for him, and inflicted a

fearful wound in the poor fellow's side. He just managed to crawl home, and was now under kind and careful treatment.

"We're afraid he will die. Poor Blanco! he is so very much hurt. But papa and Mr Richards are *determined* to shoot the hyæna. They will watch for him when he comes again to eat the donkeys. You know hyænas like donkeys better than anything else."

They did shoot him. The next time we visited the camps, my horse shied at something which stood under a tree at the entrance. It was the hyæna, dead and stuffed with straw as a warning to all future marauders. Blanco was well, and frisking round his dead enemy.

The inexorable city gates would soon close, and we had to leave the rural charms and freedom of the encampment and return to town. Just as we mounted, I perceived Rachel and her father coming down the hillside.

"You will have a holiday from your lessons, Miss Russell," said Mary, "for I mean to keep Rachel here a few days; she has not been looking well lately, and needs fresh air. Her little brothers must do without her for a while."

We cantered on, and met them at the foot of the hill.

"Oh, Miss Russell," Rachel began, "something so very wonderful has happened."

"Yes, it *is* wonderful," added her father. "I do not

know if it is true, it is so wonderful. I have found my sister's son in Jerusalem."

"How was it, Abraham?"

"I had one sister, and she loved me very much; but she married, and she had one son; and afterwards her husband became the rabbi of another town in Russia, and so I never saw her more. But, my good lady, I found her son here! I was walking yesterday near my house, and I saw a young Russian Jew, and he had lost his way in the streets, and I saw that he was newly arrived in Jerusalem; and I spoke to him, and asked him what town he was from, and behold he was my sister's son,—my dear sister Rebekah's son!"

"But will he be friendly to you when he knows all?"

"Ah! that I don't know. He was very friendly yesterday; and he is such a fine young man! I hope you will see him. He has brought his wife also. But I told him nothing yesterday. He will learn that from the Jews soon enough. If he will be friendly with me, I will bring him to you, Mr Walter."

"Do; I should like it very much. Good-bye, we must not stay now."

After we had reached the top of the hill, Walter reined in his horse. "So that is Rachel? Emily, what a lovely creature she is!"

"Ah! I fogot that you never saw her before. Is she not lovely?"

"And so bewitchingly simple; no wonder her father is wrapped up in her."

"She is the shiest creature in the world. You saw

her to advantage now; she is all excitement about this cousin."

"No wonder, poor things! cut off as they are from all their friends. But she is very fond of you, Emily. Why, she never took her eyes off you while her father was speaking."

"Poor child! she is very affectionate, and only too grateful for any little kindness. I believe she would do anything I tell her; and yet she is high-spirited too, and has a will of her own."

"Like the rest of the fair sex. I like them all the better for that, yourself included, though you are so decided now and then. How well she speaks English!"

"You did not hear much of her English; but she does speak surprisingly well, I think, because she has never heard any but correct English spoken, and learns a good deal from books."

"I must have her portrait some day, Emily."

"Must you? I dare say we shall be able to manage it. You are preparing long tasks for yourself, brother; but indeed they are pleasant ones. I peeped at your work yesterday before going out. Sarah's is a striking likeness."

"She will be like, but she is scarcely begun. I shall have to work very hard this winter, Emily."

"An idea struck me this morning while you were sketching. Next spring, when the time of barley harvest comes, let us go and pitch tents at Bethlehem, and you can paint the scene of your picture with more life and force than if you merely go now and then to sketch."

"You are right; that is excellent! It will be the very way to catch the spirit of the story. We will go, by all means—at least I trust all will be well, and that we shall be able to go. Spring is still a long way off."

"Yes, many things may happen before then; but that is my plan. I am so glad you like it."

"I always like your plans. Now here is one of mine, or rather of Mr Andersen's: for us to go some morning the week after next, and he will ride with us first to Bethlehem, and look for *my* place, and then let us take a round to see some interesting villages."

When the day appointed came, we rode over to the camp as soon as the gates were opened in the morning. Walter carried saddle-bags, in which were materials for luncheon as well as for picture-making. Peculiarly delightful was the morning air. Heavy masses of dew clouds lay in the valleys and on the plains, and every moistened stone glittered in the sunshine. The shepherds were going forth leading their flocks to pasture, and the kids and lambs danced and skipped in innocent glee.

The air was fresh and almost cold,—most unlike what I had formerly imagined as the climate of Syria. Of course, our first object was to reach the convent valley and join Mr Andersen, whom we found waiting. Instead of crossing the hills to the usual Bethlehem road, we pursued the valley we were in almost as far as the oak-tree near the Valley of Roses, and then skirted the hills on the left so as to strike obliquely

into the Bethlehem road. The wild thyme was delicious; and little crested larks ran before us, and would perch on a stone and sing, and plume their wings and soar high over head, and rival each other's melody.

Just before we got into the regular Bethlehem road, we came upon a large stone partly sunk in the ground. It was hollowed out, and seemed to have been the reservoir of a wine or oil press.

"This has a story connected with the Virgin," said Mr Andersen. "Once she was fleeing with the Holy Child in her arms from some enemies who wished to kill her. She got as far as this, and her pursuers were gaining upon her. There was no refuge at hand, when this stone lifted itself up. She stepped into the hollow, and it sunk down again to the ground, and entirely concealed her and her babe until the enemies were past, when it rose again as you now see it, and she came out and went her way. You will find many such stories current among the Bethlehem peasantry, especially the women."

We reached the town, and, passing through it, proceeded at once to look for the object of Walter's desires—the place we had formerly chosen for the scene of his picture; but I will not describe it yet. We then went once more to see the grotto and the church. On leaving them, there was, as usual, a crowd of Bethlehemites assembled to sell their wares, and look at us.

"Now, Mr Andersen, if you please, let us ask some of these fine fellows about their journeys to the Moab

country, that I may ascertain whether it is their a'adeh to come back past the spot I have chosen."

"Willingly.—Ya Elias! O thou Elijah, good morning to thee."

"Marhhaba! [welcome.] May God give thee a good morning! How is thy honour's health? Please God, thou art in health."

"In health, O Elias."

"Praise be to God!"

"I want to ask thee something—tell me."

"Upon my head be it."

"Tell me, dost you ever go to Kerek?"

"I do go, when there is any business."

"And when thou goest, which is the best road?"

"May God give thee a good morning! There are two ways."

"And which is the best way?"

"Both are good."

Mr Andersen smiled, and turning to Walter, said, "You see his caution; we must put our question a little differently. An Arab does not easily commit himself until he knows the precise object of the question."

Meanwhile the man looked up steadily in Mr Andersen's face, his mouth a little open, as if he would take in information by every possible channel, and he now and then cast a sharp glance at my brother.

"Thou dost not understand my meaning, O Elias. Which is the most level road—the best for travelling?"

"Ah! does this Khawâjah wish to travel? There is

blood between my father's brother's daughter's husband and the Taamira, [Bedaween.] I cannot go until that is settled."

"Now, O Elias, thy sense is small. Am not I English, and do I ask one question when I mean another? This"——

"True, O my lord! do not regard my words."

"This gentleman is not thinking of travelling; but I want to know which road is the easiest."

Here one of the bystanders chimed in, "That's it; answer, O Elias."

"O my lord, may God give thee a good morning! Some parts of both the roads are good, and some of them are bad."

"That is true," answered the bystanders in chorus.

"And which is the most bad, and which is the most good?"

"God alone knows that."

Bystanders—"He knows it."

"Come, come, Elias: I want an answer. Which is the best for camels; which is the best for flocks? Didst thou never bring flocks from Kerek?"

Elias raised his eyebrows and head by a contraction of the muscle at the back of the neck, and uttered a chirp, putting the tongue against the teeth, the universal Arab gesture for No.

"I brought lambs from Kerek before last harvest," cried a sturdy young fellow, whose beard was just beginning to grow, "and the Taamira waylaid us, and took away one hundred and three and fifty, and I

wounded one of their men, and so there is blood between us."

"Hold thy peace and be bashful," cried Elias.

"No, let him speak," said Mr Andersen: "I want to know something, and thou dost not answer, O Elias. Tell me, boy, what is thy name, (with peace.")

"My name? Esa."

"O Esa, how didst thou go to Kerek?"

"I went walking."

"Which way didst thou go?"

"I went down towards the Hebron road, and so across by the country of the Jehhaleen."

"Which way didst thou come back?"

"The same way."

"Where is the other road?"

Bystanders, in chorus.—"By Tekoa."

"Is it a good way? Do any of you come that way now?"

Again the chirrup from all present.

"What is the reason?"

"The Taamira are on that road."

"Have none of you ever come that way?"

"I came that way twice," said Elias.

"Which is the shortest?"

"The way by Tekoa."

"And thou dost not know if it is a good road! O Elias, how is this? Why dost thou not answer?"

"O my lord, may God give thee a good morning! Lengthen thy patience [literally, *thy soul*] a little bit;" and he held up his right hand, bringing close all the

tips of the fingers turned upwards, as if they held something, a gesture signifying—"a little bit." "My lord asked me which road is the most bad, and which is the most good."

Bystanders.—"True! true!"

Elias.—"God alone knows; but the road by Tekoa is the shortest."

"And the easiest?" again asked Mr Andersen, whose patience was getting exhausted. Walter was too intent on his point to perceive the farce; but I could scarcely subdue my inclination to laughter. The gravity and total absence of disrespect gave the whole thing the comical effect.

"And the easiest, O Elias?"

"O my lord, there was once a camel, and he was carrying stones, and he was taken down that hill [pointing to a hill on the road opposite, steep and rugged enough] and up that hill, and his master asked him which was best, the going up or the coming down, and he answered, 'May the father of both be burnt!'"

I could resist no longer, and burst into a fit of laughing. Walter laughed to. Mr Andersen, though he could not help smiling, was provoked at the perverse turning aside of these Arabs from his point.

"I have no doubt they believed me when I said you did not want to go travelling; but the habit of caution is born with them. What is to be done? I fear your question will remain unanswered."

"Let us tell them what I want; surely they know who Ruth and Naomi are."

Mr Andersen smiled again. "I fancy not, but we can try. They may understand something about picture-making, because they have lately begun to copy from engravings which the monks procure for their shell-carving; but as to Ruth and Naomi, that is not very likely. Tell me, O ye Bethlehemites, can you read?"

The chirp to signify No from all but one, who cried, "My uncle can read and write."

"Well. Did you ever hear the story of Naomi?"

"Naomi, what's that?"

"The woman Naomi."

"Who was she?" and they drew nearer, and looked eagerly for more.

"You know who King David was?"

"Neby Daoud—the prophet David—certainly."

"Well, his father's grandmother was Naomi."

"Yah—indeed," (in chorus.)

"You never heard of her?"

Once more the chirp.

"You never heard how, when once there was a famine, she went to Kerek, and how her husband died there?"

"We never heard." Then said one, "Before Brahim Pasha there was a famine, and many people went to Kerek; perhaps it was then?"

"We wanted to know," said Mr Andersen, "about the road by which she and her daughter came back."

"Ask the Khury," (the priest,) cried one; "he will know."

"Yes," said Mr Andersen to us, "and get some monkish tradition or invention on the spot."

"No, no," said Walter; "I don't want that."

"In fact," said Mr Andersen, "our best plan will be to get this man to show us the road which comes by Tekoa, and I think you will have probability in its favour. The road south, towards Hebron, must be a roundabout way."

We did so. Elias cheerfully walked before us and showed the way. We left the crowd shaking their heads, and ejaculating, "Wonderful! Who knows what may be the reason? Those English know much."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

TO BETHLEHEM—JEWS AND BEDAWEEN AT RACHEL'S SEPULCHRE.

AFTER seeing the direction of the Tekoa road, we went round to look at Solomon's pools, passing through a valley at the back of Bethlehem, along the side of which there was the ancient aqueduct which goes through Bethlehem to the temple in Jerusalem. The winding and bending of the valley among the bold

mountains was picturesque. In one part there were two or three black tents.

"These must be some of the Taamira," said Mr Andersen; "there is a spring down there near the fig-trees. I dare say if it were evening or morning we should see their camels and their goats down there."

As he spoke I distinguished a herd of some hundred camels, of all sizes, coming over the brow of an opposite mountain, and an immense flock, or rather several flocks, of goats following their shepherds. We could scarcely see the men, but their voices came distinctly across the valley, and Mr Andersen said he heard them remarking upon us: they had seen us, perhaps, before we saw them.

"They might not molest us," said he, "but it is as well not to linger near them, for they are arrant thieves, and no Pasha could or would catch any of them."

So we gave our horses the rein and cantered on. The first sight of the pools of Solomon surprised and delighted us. We had no idea of anything so grand as these immense reservoirs. True, there was no water in them, but we could see their construction all the better.

"If all his ideas were carried out on the same grand scale, he must have been a magnificent king."

"Now," said Mr Andersen, "round at the other side of that khan, miscalled a castle, we shall find delightful water, and may rest under the shade of the walls and eat our luncheon."

Just on turning the corner we were startled by the appearance of a horseman—a wild fellow, quivering a lance with his right hand, a black covering over his head, from beneath which could be just distinguished fiery eyes and a very dark-coloured face. He started at seeing us, but it was not with fear, and he pricked forward his horse at full gallop to meet us.

"Better stand still," said Mr Andersen; and he drew up. We did the same. When close upon us the fellow brandished his spear over his head, wheeled his horse sharp round, and, describing a circle, drew up in front of us.

"Good morning to thee," said Mr Andersen.

The man's expression of face changed on being addressed in Arabic, and he responded, "May God give thee a good morning! Where do you come from?"

Mr Andersen's reply made me smile. "From behind."

"That's the reply," he said to us, "an Arab would have made under similar circumstances." This fact also produced its effect on our dusky friend. Again his face changed.

"Ye are not pilgrims?"

"No, we are Jerusalemites. We are Ingleez."

"Ingleez! Where are you going?"

Once more came a genuine Arab answer from Mr Andersen. "Forward," (or rather, "to before.")

The Bedawee grinned and showed his brilliant teeth, and, before he had time to speak again, Mr Andersen

turned the question against him. "Now, where art thou going?"

"I! To the gate of God," (in Arabic, Ala Bab allah, *i.e.*, anywhere forwards.)

"Farewell! ma essalameh, O sheikh."

"God give thee peace!"

"Dost thou belong to Sheikh Hhamdân?"

"Ay."

"Salute him from me; he is my friend." And we rode on.

"It was just as well that we were not dismounted," observed Mr Andersen; "our horses might have proved too strong a temptation for him."

"He appears to be going down to the tents in the valley yonder."

"Yes. I am surprised at finding him so near, in fact upon the Hebron road, after the Pasha's grand doings; but perhaps he had only come up to exercise his mare upon this plain."

"What a lithe creature she was—all sinew!"

"I admired the perfect gentleness with which she stood on being suddenly reined in."

"And her pretty little ears and speaking eyes."

"Do you think we were in any danger of being robbed?"

"No, perhaps not—at least as soon as he saw who we were. His sheikh is very desirous of keeping up amity with us, on account of the turn which he takes among several others in escorting travellers to the Jordan."

"All's well that ends well."

We turned northwards into the Jerusalem and Hebron road. Here we found camels and donkeys, in parties of two's and three's, going to Jerusalem, laden with pine-branches.

"Those are for the Jews to use in their feast of tabernacles," said Mr Andersen. "Every house will have its tabernacles on the terrace, and for one week they will live in them."

How refreshing it was to see the bright verdure! The smell, too, was delicious. It was difficult to tell which looked most curious, the donkeys or the camels, amid the nodding plumes. Yet the camels were dignified enough, with their stately step, and long necks swaying to and fro. Having been balked of our resting-place, we rode forward to Bait Jala, and found shelter under some of the very fine olive-trees in its vast grove. The scene was like that of an English park in its vistas among the trees. The people were gathering olives, though they seemed very far from being ripe. With rude ladders against the branches, they were beating the fruit down with sticks. It was easy to see that the berries on the topmost boughs would not be touched.* The boys were up in the trees, and the men on the ladders, while the women and children gathered the fruit off the ground into baskets, and heaped them up on their cloaks. Camels were lying down, patiently waiting until the sacks should be filled, and ready for them to bear away to the olive-press.

* Isaiah xvii. 6.

We sat down under a tree at a little distance, and asked one of the women to bring us some water to drink. When she came back, bringing a little pitcher, pretty enough in form, and in colour black, having queer Oriental patterns of scarlet paint, we asked her if that were spring water. She made the chirruping sign for No, and said, "It is water from heaven."

"Have you no spring here?"

"We have a spring, but water from heaven is better than water from the earth."

We asked her whether the olives were ripe.

"Not yet."

"Then why do you gather them?"

"It is a bad year; olives are dear this year; and if we do not gather them, they will be stolen."

"But unripe olives will make the oil bad."

"Perhaps, but it will be better than none. My trees are pledged; and if I get no oil, I must pay double."

"Why did you pledge them?"

"It was not I, but my husband's father—peace be with him! Twelve years ago he had no money to pay the taxes; so he pledged his trees for five hundred piastres, and wrote a bond upon himself to pay fifteen jars of oil to Suleiman Assali; and if there is any deficient, he was to pay two jars of oil next year for every one. That year was also a bad one, and our olives were stolen, and we had only three jars of oil; so Suleiman wrote a bond upon my father-in-law for twenty-four jars of oil for the next harvest, and if any were deficient, two were to be given for every one."

"But you paid the next year?"

"We could not; we had only ten jars, and the remaining fourteen became twenty-eight. The next year we paid fifteen, and the other thirteen became twenty-six. And my father-in-law died, peace be with him! and my husband sold his two cows, and bought oil; and still he could not finish with Suleiman, (may his father be burnt!) and we now owe him still eighty jars of oil."

"Where is your husband?"

"He is gone to sell his goats; for last night Suleiman sent a horse-soldier to our house to buy the oil, and we had to kill a kid for his supper, and to give him butter and rice and honey; and he filled his bag with barley, twice as much as his horse could eat; and if he stays a week, our family will be ruined. May God have mercy upon us!"

"Is it possible," exclaimed Walter, "that the peasantry are ground down in this manner?"

"I have seen but too much of it," said Mr Andersen. "The few who have capital employ it, generally speaking, in thus taking advantage of the wants of the poor. Suleiman Assali is a near neighbour of yours. He owns the soap factory in the street next to your house. He uses this oil for his soap-making. That trade is entirely in the hands of a few Moslems of Jerusalem, and I dare say half this forest is pledged to them in the same manner.—Tell me, O woman, what is thy name?"

"Thy slave, Um Zaid," (mother of Zaid.)

"Say, Um Zaid, which are thy trees?"

"These here, as far as that white stone, and up to where the boy is standing."

"Are those next trees pledged to any one?"

"Those are my brother-in-law's. Yes, they were pledged seven years ago for four hundred piastres. He owes sixty jars of oil on them."

"And those trees?"

"They are pledged to Moosa el Assali, and those next to Abdallah el Khaldy, and those up there to Emin Effendi, and those to Ali Effendi, and those to Yussuf Effendi. Our whole village, and all our olive-yards, are pledged. We are slaves to the Moslems. Woe is me, our house is ruined! Woe is me, our days are shortened by grief!"

"That explains the poverty-stricken look of these people; and this in the midst of such beautiful healthy trees, such clean cultivation, and fine rich lands."

"Poor creatures! Let us buy a few of her olives; I should like to taste them."

"Not of these," said Mr Andersen, smiling, "they cannot be eaten so; but we will have some of the pickled ones."

But the woman had not any, so I asked if she ever came to Jerusalem.

"Sometimes on Friday," (market day.)

I told her to bring me a basket of olives. There was no difficulty in making her understand where we lived, for she knew our house as being near that of the man in whose power her husband's property was.

"I shall be curious to know if you eat your olives

when you get them, Miss Russell. It is not everybody that likes olives."

"I must learn, for they appear to be a grand article of food in this country."

"We have a saying that, to a stranger, the taste of the first olive is detestable, the second he can endure, and the third he likes so much that ever after he is an olive-eater. Once, during a siege of Jerusalem, our whole diet consisted of rice and olives. We could get nothing else, and were truly thankful to have them in store in our house, otherwise we should have been badly off."

Our luncheon finished, we remounted, and rode up through the village, a wretched assemblage of huts, to the top of the mountain. The path—for it scarcely deserved the name of a road—was excessively steep, and occasionally lay over slabs of rock. In one place I turned my head to say something to Walter, and my horse chose to walk on one of these sloping rocks, polished like marble. In an instant I found myself on the ground. The horse's feet had slipped from under him, and down we came, fortunately on the off-side; and being against a bank, I had no difficulty in getting out of the saddle and jumping up, for the animal lay perfectly still till I did so. But it might have been a very ugly accident, and gave me a lesson to avoid smooth rocks for the future. My horse was like all the native horses, wonderfully clever and safe in climbing up and down the mountain paths, often as steep as staircases and infinitely rougher. But, with the pe-

culiar broad-plated shoes which are used here, it is evident that, should a horse slide on a smooth stone, he has no chance of recovering himself, and must fall with his rider. So henceforth I avoided smooth rocks when on horseback.

The view from the top of the mountain was of vast extent. Southwards the eye ranged over the endless mountains of Judah; eastwards, over the Jordan valley and Moab. Bethlehem and Rachel's sepulchre were at our feet; Jerusalem farther off, its domes bright in the sunshine; and far away in the blue distance stretched the northern mountains. There was health and life in the breeze.

"Down here," said Mr Andersen, "divided only by the deep valley at the south-west, are the mountains of Bether; and if we could see round this shoulder, we could look into the present village of Bether, or Bitteer, and its vegetable gardens, which supply a large amount of produce to the Jerusalem market, for there is a fine spring of water here. You remember that it was at Bether that Bar Cochebas, the false Messiah, entrenched himself against the Romans. Traces of fortifications still remain."

We were anxious to see the place, but it was too late in the day to go there. However, Mr Andersen took us down the back of the mountain we were upon, and by a romantically beautiful valley which ran into the Bether valley, whence* we started half a dozen gazelles, and they bounded up the rocks, and stood to look at us,

* Song of Solomon ii. 17.

their graceful outlines against the clear blue sky. I never enjoyed a ride more: the unexpected windings and turnings, and the solitude and the bold crags on either side. In one place we came upon a massive rock which had fallen into the midst of the valley. High up in the block some ancient hermit had hollowed out for himself a rude chamber, to which a small square hole served the purposes of window and door. How utterly lonely his life must have been!

By and by a turn in the valley brought to view terraces of fig and vine up the mountain-side, and soon after, on the left, the Bether valley itself. We cast a longing glance up the vale with its pretty vegetable gardens, in the same style as those of Siloam.

Mr Andersen pointed out the hill called the Jewish Ruin; but the shades were beginning to lengthen, and fast riding was impossible, for the road homewards lay in the bottom of what had once been a mountain torrent, and the horses could scarce pick their way among the rolling stones of all shapes and sizes. Soon we heard the sound of water. More gardens lay before us, one or two fine walnut-trees, and a brilliant streamlet of pure water on our right, gushing from the rock, which had been hewn into a picturesque fountain—rough native blocks in contrast with Corinthian pilasters. Women were washing their vegetables, in preparation for a walk to Jerusalem at daybreak; and flocks of goats were coming down the hills in different directions, skipping and gambolling where none but a goat could have found footing, and occasionally rolling down

the almost perpendicular slope. The fountain is called the Fountain of St Philip. An ancient Roman road goes through these passes, and is said to lead towards Gaza. A little farther on we found traces of the road remaining. I was much struck at observing, apparently high up on a mountain top before us, a village which I knew from the opposite side as being on a moderate hill. This gave proof of the great depth of the ravine. A few resolute men in such places as these might well have held their own against an army of assailants.

And now we get among familiar objects in the Valley of Roses, and coming upon a good road were able to make up for lost time.

Mr Andersen and we parted. He went down the valleys towards the Convent of the Cross, and we struck off to the right in order to gain the shortest road to Jerusalem.

"Oh!" exclaimed Walter, "the delight of these quiet rides in unbeaten paths, climbing unvisited hills, peeping into secluded valleys, and drinking of unsought fountains, that spring pure and bright in the hill-country of Judah! How very much travellers miss who only spend a few days, and see what may be seen by going straight from Jaffa to Jerusalem, Jerusalem to Bethlehem—always on the high road! This cannot be called *seeing* Palestine. I would not be a mere traveller in the Holy Land. How is it that people can be content to come and go, and skim through such a country, and leave its choicest beauties unseen and even unimagined?"

"And so, Emily, we have had a peep—just a glimpse —at Bedaween to-day. I wonder if they would treat me well if I were to go and visit them at those black tents of theirs?"

"According to the laws of Arab hospitality, they ought."

"Well, I will wait till I can speak a little more of their tongue. It would be very amusing to spend a few days among them."

We saw more of them sooner than we expected. In less than a week we were riding near Rachel's sepulchre, when the scream of a woman reached our ears, and then another. Something was going wrong there. Walter galloped up to the spot. I followed, and we found three of those dark fellows around two Jews and a Jewess. One man had got hold of the Jew; two were pulling the woman along, or rather were endeavouring to rifle her pockets. We got up just in time to see the other Jew give some money to the first Arab, who sprang on his horse and was out of sight in an instant. The other two, however, did not seem inclined to release their prey. Walter flung his reins to me, and jumped off to grapple with the Bedaween. But they had already caught sight of reinforcements to our strength. Mr Wells and his kawass appeared riding leisurely homewards from Bethlehem. Walter had seized one of the Arabs; but quick as thought the man slipped his arms out of the *abbai* or brown-striped cloak, sprang across the road, and the two ran and bounded, fleet as gazelles, over rocks and stones, and

were out of sight before Walter's voice could be heard by Mr Wells. From where he was he could not see what was going on, and the breeze was blowing the sounds the wrong way. In another moment, however, he had heard, galloped up, and sent his kawass in chase of the rogues; but they had popped into some cave, or got behind some rock. They were off, and in a quarter of an hour the kawass came back without them.

We turned our attention to the poor trembling victims. Happily, nothing but fright and the loss of a few piastres had befallen them, but they were shivering with terror.

"Why!" exclaimed Walter, on looking at the Jew, "you were the person I saw praying by the well the morning we came up from Jaffa. He is so perfectly white from fear that I could scarcely recognise him; but I particularly remember that handsome face and the brown curls. This must be his wife. Here, Emily, give me the horses, and let me help you to dismount; perhaps you can comfort her."

She needed comfort, poor creature, and could scarcely stand; but, when I addressed her in German, the surprise diverted her from her fright, and the two gradually recovered their power of speech, and told us they "were returning from Hebron, and were stopping to pray at 'Rachel our mother,' when these Goyim (Gentiles) came upon us and began to kill us."

As the colour returned to her cheeks, we observed that she too was strikingly beautiful, having sparkling black eyes and a brilliant complexion. They had

lately arrived from Russia, and were going to settle in Jerusalem.

"What will become of them in Jerusalem? They are too young for the living death of the unfortunate Jerusalem Jews. It is sad to think what that young creature will look like after a few months of starvation. Our baker's daughter Malca would be quite as beautiful if she had enough to eat."

Mr Wells and his kawass had been holding a consultation about the robbers, and made up their minds that they must belong to the tribe we had seen the other day—the Taamira, who consider their district reaches at least as far as this spot, and who have been in the habit of levying tribute upon the Jews for allowing them to pray unmolested at Rachel's sepulchre.

"I will put a stop to the whole affair," said Mr Wells. "It is disgraceful that poor creatures like these should be disturbed or robbed for praying here. Ho, Ahhmet! mount thy horse. Ride to the tents of Sheikh Hhamdân; salute him from me; tell him I require the thieves who have robbed these people to be found out, and the money sent back fourfold, according to Arab laws; and when that is done, let him favour me with a visit in the city, for I wish to speak with him. Sleep at his tents, and come back in the morning."

All turned out as Mr Wells expected. The robbers were Taamira, claiming, as they said, their dues. Sheikh Hhamdân, rather than offend the English Consul, returned the money fourfold, on the ground that, not being the regular day,—viz., the eve of new

moon, on which it was "a'adeh" for the Jews to pray, —his men ought not to have levied the money.

Walter went to the consulate on purpose to witness the interview between Mr Wells and the sheikh. He was a robust-looking man of about fifty, with shaggy eyebrows, a jovial countenance, and but little of the swarthy complexion of his followers. He wore a robe of fine scarlet cloth under the brown-striped cloak, and a belt full of silver-mounted pistols—presents, he said, from European travellers.

After coffee and pipes, business was introduced by the Consul.

"O Sheikh Hhamdân! I have a great respect for thee."

"We are brothers, the English Consul and I."

"Then let us arrange a little matter. Thou knowest that all the Jews are under the shadow of the wings of my Queen—may God lengthen her days!—and any harm that happens to one of them, is as if it happened to myself."

"This I have heard, O Bek."

"It has become known to me that some of the ignorant and foolish among thy tribe take money from the Jews that pray at Rachel's sepulchre. Now thou knowest that the Sultan—God preserve him!—wishes all men to pray according to their custom without restraint or fear. Wherefore, O sheikh, I ask of thee to hinder thy people from this foolish custom, that there may always be peace between us."

"Upon my head be it. I desire, before all things,

that there may be peace between thee, O Bek, and me."

"El Hamdulillah, there is peace; may it never be broken."

"Inshallah."

A few more whiffs of the pipe, and the sheikh, according to Arab formula of politeness, asked of the host permission to depart.

"Go in peace; I have been glad to see thee."

Walter could see from the drawing-room window into the court, that in the entrance-hall the dragoman and the kawasses invested the sheikh, by the Consul's orders, with a smart red-and-yellow turban, and a glorious pair of scarlet boots.

He kept his word; and the Jews who went to pray at Rachel's sepulchre, ceased to pay tribute from that day forward.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ABRAHAM FINDS HIS NEPHEW JUDAH.

RABBI ABRAHAM came to see us that evening.

"You have seen my sister's son, Mr Russell?"

"I? No; at least not that I am aware of."

"Sir, you have both seen him and done him much kindness. Did you not deliver three persons from the Arabs at Rachel's sepulchre? and has not the English Consul sent them back their money, four times more

than was taken? That was my nephew. I met him in the street this day. I had not seen him since the first day, for you know I am afraid to go into the Jewish quarter, and I know that the Jews will tell him all about me. So I was afraid I should see him no more; but to-day I met him, and he told me that he has been to Hebron with his wife, and what happened to him, and how a gentleman delivered him from the hands of the Gentiles—I mean of the Arabs, and a lady was there too, and I soon knew that it was you and your sister."

"Does he still continue friendly to you, Abraham?"

"O sir, I think God still works miracles. He will become a Christian—my sister's son! He is a Christian already in his heart!"

"That is wonderful, indeed. And his wife?"

"His wife knows nothing, my dear lady, and it is not yet time to tell her anything; perhaps, if he waits a little, he will not lose his wife. Ach! I cannot speak of these things," he said hastily.—"I will tell you how it has happened that he is a Christian. In his father's town in Russia they are all Jews: there are no Goyim at all—no Christians, I mean, with crosses and pictures; so my sister's son never heard anything about Christianity. But one day a friend of his brought him a Hebrew writing about the Messiah, and he read it with him, and it was all about Jesus of Nazareth. I know what it was, for I have asked him. It was the Gospel of Matthew, copied by another Jew, in a town forty versts away from that town, and brought to this

man by a friend of his who came to study the Talmud with the rabbi of that town, for he is the greatest rabbi in the country. My sister's son read it, and found it very good; and was surprised, and went to his rabbi, and said, 'The Messiah has come, and Israel does not know it!' 'How so, my son?' And Judah, that is my nephew's name, told him what he had been reading. Then the rabbi rent his clothes, and cried, 'Alas! my son, alas! thou hast read a book of the idolaters—may their name be blotted out! Where is thy father?' And they fetched his father, and the Beth Din (that is, the Council) was assembled in the synagogue, and they called Judah before them, and asked him if he would obey their voice. And he said, 'Surely;' and they desired him to forget that accursed book, and to fast three days for having read it, and to give alms to the poor. He obeyed; but he could not forget the book. He could not believe it was written by idolaters. And one night he was weeping, and his father saw it, and asked the reason. And he said, 'O my father, my heart is heavy. What if the Messiah be really come?' 'Hush! my son. If He had come, it would have been in the Holy City, Jerusalem—may she be rebuilt!' 'But what if He did come there in truth, O my father?' 'Hearken to me, my son. This is a temptation from the evil one. I advise thee to go on pilgrimage to the land of our fathers, and pray at the holy tomb of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob—may their remembrance be blessed!—and at the tomb of our mother

Rachel, and this thing will depart from thee, for no evil can come to an Israelite in the Holy City. And thus shalt thou flee away far from this abomination, and be at peace, and say, "kaddish" for me and for thy mother, when we are gathered to our fathers.', And he obeyed his father's voice, and came here with his wife Miriam. Yesterday he met me in the street, and he looked at me very strangely, and I knew that he had heard about me from the Jews. But still he saluted me, and said, 'Tell me what doest thou here?' And I answered, 'What doest *thou?* Dost thou not know that Messiah—blessed be His name!—is come, and we must obey His voice?' And then he told me his story, and asked me many questions; but I was afraid for him, lest the Jews should see us talking together, and take away his wife, whom he loves as the apple of his eye. So I told him to meet me in the evening among the rocks outside the Jaffa Gate, and there we talked for three hours, and I answered his questions, and I am sure he will become a Christian. He believes everything; but he will wait until his child shall be born, and then he will speak with his wife."

"Truly, this is a wonderful story, Emily. A young Jew sent here to escape from Christianity falls in with his Christian relative! But in what blessed ignorance the Russian Jews must be living, not to know that there are Christians here also!"

"Sir, if the whole world were to tell them, they will not believe that a Jew can become a Meshummed (destroyed one) in the Holy Land. You know they

say that he who only makes three steps in the Holy Land is saved and forgiven all his sins!"

"But your friends, when they hear of you?"

"They will not hear of me. No Jew will write that to them. They will tell them I am dead. Have they not mourned for me? They treat me as dead. Do they pay me my money? I am sure some has come for me, but I never got it."

"Rabbi Abraham, if you will allow me to ask you,—I have often wished to do so, but feared you would be offended or hurt,—you have no regular income now? No one sends you money now? You cannot live upon air."

"Sir, God has taken care of me. I have bought wheat enough this harvest for bread till next summer; and He will not let me be hungry when that is finished."

"But wheat is not enough. Your children are young and growing; they ought to have more than bread."

A tear gathered in his eyes, but he brushed it away. "Sir, I have thought of that, and my little David has had fever lately. Perhaps he wants more food than he gets."

"Just so. Come, now, you must let me help you."

"In one way, sir, if you will be so kind. I hear the Consul wants a Jewish dragoman. I will serve him well if you can recommend me, and the pay will be a great help to me."

Walter did speak to Mr Wells, and Abraham was duly installed as dragoman, and earned a small salary, for which he was very grateful.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE FORMER RAIN—RIDE TO NEBY SAMWIL.

CLOUDY days began to appear. How very delightful they seemed after the uninterrupted sunshine of so many months! There was rest for the eyes in the subdued light, and a fresh charm in every landscape, as seen under the sober and softening gray tints, or varied by passing shadows—now spreading upon the hill-side, now dipping into the valley, or chasing each other across the broad fields of the swelling plain, as the clouds were driven up by the western breeze. People were longing for rain. The Jews were fasting and praying for it in their synagogues, for most of the cisterns were long since exhausted. Ours were still supplied; but some of our friends were not so well off as ourselves, and were buying water for all household needs. For two months past, Sarah had obtained leave to carry home daily a pitcher of water for her grandchildren.

True, scores of donkeys laden with the water of Siloam and En-rogel were daily brought up into the Jewish quarter; but how to muster piastres enough for the price was the sore difficulty with these poor people, and the price was rising in proportion as the rain was delayed.

I knew all this, and yet it struck curiously upon my ear, as I was going out one morning—the weather

seemed uncertain—I could not be sure whether my errand might be done before rain fell; and so, after looking up at the clouds, I said to Constantine, "I want to go out. Do you think it will rain?" Disregarding every idea but that of rain, he exclaimed with fervour, "Inshallah! Please God. Inshallah!"

However, I got out and back again, and no rain fell yet. The same evening we were passing through one of the streets near the Armenian Convent. I heard behind me the voice of a child, sad and complaining. "*Do*, father, get me a little water; I am so thirsty—*do!*"

"Wait a *little* longer, my son, and you shall have some."

The child began to cry. I looked round: it was a little fellow of about four years old. His father was the husband of our baker. The child appeared so distressed that I spoke to the father.

"We have not been able," replied he, "to get any water to-day yet, (and it was about sunset.) The Siloam boy has so many to supply that he has not been able to come to us, but perhaps now he will have brought it. The child is not well; he has had fever, and feels it more."

Mrs Wells's house was close at hand, and I stepped in there and obtained a draught for the unfortunate child. How it drank, and the father too! Mrs Wells said that several of her Jewish acquaintances came every day and filled their pitchers at her well. No

wonder the poor creatures are unable to keep themselves and their houses clean.

That very night rain fell!—pattering on the paved terrace, plashing in the courts. What music in the ears of thousands!

All Jerusalem looked washed clean when I got up next morning. The sun rose and shone for a few minutes in a little space of blue sky just over the Moab mountains, and his beams were reflected by every dome of the city, wet and glistering from the rain. All the landscape looked fresh: the dust washed off; the colours brightened; the fields of a richer brown; the walls and battlements more brilliant orange; the distant hills a lovelier violet, and the very sky itself, in that little narrow strip, of a purer blue. Everybody looked glad, and El Hamdulillah, (Praise be to God!) were the first words that fell from everybody's lips.

Constantine and Helaneh were busily at work. They had plugged up the channels of the cistern the night before, and opened the waste-pipes; and now they were sweeping the water from terrace to terrace, with the summer's accumulation of dust in a muddy stream. Presently another shower fell, and the terraces were completely cleansed. Then the waste-pipes were stopped in their turn, the cistern channels opened, and we could hear the hollow roaring of the water as it fell echoing into the cistern. But the showers only lasted that day. The evening was bright—too bright for the hopes of the poor people. Still Haj Omar, the groom,

said that at least fifty goat-skins of water had fallen into the well, and that was better than nothing—at least, the price of water would come down half a piastre; and so it did. Sarah told me that water was only two piastres, (fivepence,) instead of two and a half the donkey load.

We had become such good friends that she took courage to ask me for some relief for one or two of her poor neighbours.

One, a widow, with a little boy of six years old. She earned a little money by going out to wash, and actually spent half of it in paying a rabbi to teach her son Hebrew, that he might be able to read the law. The remainder was not enough to keep life in them. Another had learnt a little ironing at the hospital, but had only a day's work once a fortnight: she had a bedridden husband. There were several others in equally deplorable case. The synagogue funds were low. One got an allowance of three piastres a month, one of four, and one nothing at all, because she worked a little for her livelihood. Giving away money for nothing was a thing to which we had always felt great dislike; and therefore I told Sarah, that if she would show the others how to work, I would give them some sewing to do, and pay them for doing it. This pleased them all. Gershon the pedlar knew where to procure coarse unbleached calico. Sarah found me patterns of undergarments of the approved Jewish fashion, by which we cut out others, and gave them to the poor women to make up When done, they were sent to the hospital

for distribution to the most needy; and I soon had more applicants for employment than I knew what to do with.

The sewing, such as it was, was done by the Spanish Jewesses. It scarcely would have been called sewing in England; and I soon found that a regular sewing-school would be required, if the poor things were to make any progress in the useful art.

The Ashkenazim better understood stocking-knitting. Native cotton was sold in the bazaars, the produce of the plains of Samaria. The very old, who could see to do nothing else, could spin it, and the younger ones knit it into stockings, which were sent for distribution with the other garments. Thus my circle of acquaintances increased.

Walter's picture was making good progress. Um Murkus came regularly and willingly for her portrait, and the sweet expression of her face appeared even sweeter on Walter's canvas, so happily had he caught its gentle character.

Sarah remained in ignorance of the principal service which she rendered to us; but I managed to obtain, at least, one hour's sitting for my brother in each week, and sometimes more; so that, had she been any judge of pictures, she might have been startled at beholding her own visage if she had stepped behind Walter and looked over his shoulder; but she had no idea of either the one or the other, and gravely went on with her sewing, while my brother stood painting, and cautiously glancing at her from behind the edge of

his canvas, and endeavoured to transfer to it the sorrowful and yet resigned look which always settled upon her features when undisturbed.

I had often watched his painting, but never with so much interest. He had never been half so successful; perhaps because never so thoroughly in earnest. His mind appeared to have been wakened into new life; new faculties of perception to have been aroused by living among the intensely interesting scenes of our present home.

He worked on from day to day—not rapidly, but patiently, conscientiously absorbed in the one idea of producing a simple, truthful illustration of Bible history.

But it was very necessary to watch over him, or he would have applied too closely; and here it was convenient that we had so many desirable rides to take. When he would not have gone out for his own sake, he would do so for mine; and I had no hesitation in taking him away from his work when a pale face or approaching headache gave the warning, because every ride added to the store of thoughts and incidents, which he would most surely turn to future account. His mind was becoming steeped in ideas and images which it would hereafter give forth again with mellowed colouring. The time thus spent was in no sense lost time; and what enjoyment it was! At all seasons: in the clear heat of summer, when the very air danced, when the vines were green, and the thistle stems spread a luscious perfume; or in winter, when the fresh

ploughed earth yielded its smell, delicate flowers and gay peeped from under every stone, and the sparkling sunshine and bracing mountain air sent the blood dancing in our veins.

I particularly remember two of our rides.

The showers that had fallen were quite enough to bring out myriads of crocuses, and to soften the earth for the ploughman.

One Saturday morning we mounted our horses early for a ride to the high peak of Neby Samwil. The expedition had been planned some time before, but we had waited for a perfectly brilliant day, so as to have the much-talked-of view of the Mediterranean in perfection from the top of the minaret. And this was a perfectly brilliant day; at least so the larks thought as they perched on the stones, and tried their powers of warbling, and then sprang up towards the blue sky, and gave us merry music. So thought the horses too, and capered for glee. When we got beyond the olive groves, we found the country enlivened in every direction by groups of peasantry ploughing their land. There are no hedges to divide one man's possession from that of another; so that the eye ranges undisturbed over broad fields, where perhaps thirty yoke of oxen are employed, each in its owner's inheritance. But each man well knows his own, and so does every man of his village. A broad furrow separates it from that of his neighbour on either hand; and little pillars of stones, piled one on another, are the universal landmarks, easily removed, but sacred. There they stand,

year after year, only occasionally renewed by the owner himself.

It was curious to see all these people at work; perfectly at home as each seemed, yet there was no village in sight. That lay in a sheltered nook on the mountain-side at a distance. We visited it another day, and found each man's vineyards on the terraces near the village. Alas! the outlying hills were all bare and uncultivated, and so was even some of the corn land, but not much. Farther on, we had a proof of the accuracy with which the lands of the respective villages are marked out and known. There were ploughmen in each of two fields, only separated by a low ridge of loose stones. Our path lay close to them, and we greeted them with a newly learned Arab salutation to working men—"Good morrow. May your bodies be strengthened. What is your village?"

"Lifta."

In the next field, to the same question the man answered, "From Shafat."

"Where's that?"

"Yonder," pointing to a village on the ridge northward.

How odd their little, insignificant ploughs looked! They were light enough, for when the man came to a strong patch, he would lift up the plough with one hand, and, giving his oxen an extra push with the wooden goad, carry it forward to the good soil beyond.

In one field we saw not only oxen, but a camel

ploughing; and close by, a yoke consisting of an ox and a poor little donkey.

The voices of men calling to their oxen came clear across the valleys, even where we could scarcely see themselves; and in one place we heard a conversation carried on between two men, who were at work on opposite sides of a deep and tolerably wide ravine.*

The road to Neby Samwil is a continued ascent, and the view from the top is what one would have expected from its position. What a long stretch of the deep-blue Mediterranean!—fringed with golden sands of the coast; reaching away southwards to the Egyptian border, and north towards Cæsarea and the plain of Sharon, and the towns of Jaffa and Ramleh and Lydda; deep-green patches marking forests of olive-trees, and the many-coloured tints of the prairie-like plain; and the mountains, descending and subsiding from our very feet, cut through by ravines and romantic passes, and crowned by many a village stronghold. The mind seemed to expand in looking upon such a prospect. And yet this was only a part. Turning to the north, there were the mountains of Samaria and of Galilee. Nearer still, the tribe of Benjamin, with its many cities. Eastwards, the high table-land of Bashan and of Gilead, and the Moab country. Southwards from Jerusalem, also in sight, were the mountains of Judah, wave beyond wave in endless succession; and at our feet the royal Gibeon, cresting its own terraced hill in the midst of the plain where Joshua and the

* 1 Sam. xxvi. 13.

Canaanites, the Maccabeans and the Syrians and Romans, and many a nation beside, had striven for victory, and which had been watered by the blood of uncounted warriors. How peaceful it looks now! The ploughman scatters his seed, all unconscious of the graves which once encumbered those fields. He looks up at the sun, to watch how far it has declined from noon to sunset, and little knows how that sun was once stayed over yonder heights, while the battle raged here upon the plain—where the din of war has long been hushed, and there is now no sound save the echo of his own voice as he chants an Arab song to his patient oxen.

We came down from the Pinnacle of Delights,* as Walter called it, and wished to see the tomb of Samuel, but only found a wooden frame covered with green drapery, and brass corner ornaments on the top. But they told us the prophet lies in the sepulchre below the pavement. There were several lazy-looking peasants lounging about, and watching our movements. Walter asked the one who acted more particularly as guide, "Who was Neby Samwil?"

"Praise be to Him that knoweth, [*i.e.*, the All-knowing.] I don't know."

"Was he a Moslem?"

"We don't know."

"Was he a Christian?"

"How should we know?" said our man.

"Are we not Fellahheen-Behaim?" (peasantry and beasts,) echoed the others in chorus.

* The Crusaders called it Mount Joy.

"But we know who he was," replied Walter.

"Possibly; you Franks know everything."

"I tell you we do know. He was one of the Beni Israel. It is written in the old books, in the Torah, and he has been dead these three thousand years."

"Yah!" (oh, indeed!) said the chorus.

"I 'll tell you what it is," said an old man who had poked his head in at the back of the group, "if he has been dead so long, he has come to the knowledge of the truth by this time. He has become a good Moslem now."

"Truth! truth!" cried the chorus. "He is a good Moslem now. Peace be upon him!"

The church (for this building is a church) is in tolerable repair, at least as far as the outer shell goes. Very curious were the multitude of Hebrew names written on the walls by Jewish pilgrims, who believe this to be Ramah. While I was looking at them, Walter stood by, imagining a future day, when Christian bells may send forth cheerful sounds from this height, and when the church may be a gathering-place for worshippers from all the surrounding district.

The present village is wretched, but there are remains of antiquity—huge masonry, water channels and a tank cut in the rock, fragments of pottery, and bits of tesselated pavement.

"By the by," said Walter, "what immense manufactories of these little bits of stone there must have been in ancient times! I have noticed them everywhere, and literally in almost every field. I wonder how they

made them so nice and square too. Was it with a chisel, or by the stroke of a hammer? There is no mark of a tool upon them."

While we were looking at the grottoes and ancient water-works, some shepherd boys came about us with their flocks, for it was noon, and time to water the cattle.* How quiet each flock stood, until its own shepherd would call the animals forward to drink in their turn! One boy, a sharp little fellow about eight years old, in simplest costume of linen, with white teeth and large fine eyes, was leaning on a strong rough piece of a tree, by way of shepherd's staff. He was very happy in talking to us, and played us some rural music on his reed flute,—a simple thing enough, its cracks tied round by twine; yet its music was very pleasing. Walter bought it from him for three and a half piastres. We asked him why he carried that big stick.

"For the sake of the sheep, for the *bears* might come by day and the *lions* by night to attack them."

It reminded us of the youthful David. But we have not been able to make out that any worse animal than wolves and hyænas do infest these mountains, and he did not say that he had seen any himself.

Descending the hill, we visited the hill of Gibeon, the spring and the pool; and then, it being yet early, took a round over the hills northward, so as to see as much as possible of the tribe of Benjamin. Breezy heights, on which the villages are built, and gentl plains or deep valleys of corn land,—it bore the sam

* Genesis xxix. 1–8.

character everywhere. In one place we asked a man who was ploughing, the names of some of the villages. How interesting it was to hear the familiar Bible names in their Arab form from this ignorant peasant! "What is that village?" "Ramah." "And that?" "Makmas," (Michmash.) "And the next?" "Geba," (Gibeah.) "And that far away on the hill?" "That hill is Rummoon," (Rimmon.) "And that?" "Beereh," (Beeroth.) "And this?" "Beer Neballah, and the next Atarah, (Ashtaroth,) and that Adasa," (of Maccabean history.)

"Ask him about that fourth priest-city of Benjamin," said I.

"No, dear; I can't do that without telling him its name, and then he would, I dare say, point to some place and give it the name I want. We must wait a little, and if it is known to the Arabs, I dare say we shall find it out in the course of our rides."

As we drew near Jerusalem we met the peasantry of the morning returning to their villages, and could see better than in the morning the absurd little ploughs they had been using. Most of them were carried on donkeys,—the share, about four inches deep, on the animal's back, and the wooden part trailing on the ground. Some of the men, who did not appear to have donkeys, carried the implement with perfect ease on their own shoulders, while a boy drove the oxen, and one was actually carried on the shoulder of a little girl about nine, while her father rode the donkey.

A strange sound greeted our ears that evening as we

sat reading and working. The grinding of a barrel organ, played by an itinerant Savoyard. The very tunes so common in the streets of London! We looked at each other. But Constantine was in ecstasies, and before we were aware of his purpose, had brought the man to the door to play for our special benefit. Vienna waltzes in Jerusalem! It was too much. Constantine had never associated the idea of dancing with the sounds, for he stood stock still, hands up, head bent forward, and mouth open, and when the grinding ceased, said solemnly, "Mashallah!"

We could hear, by the clattering of pattens and the shrill voices, that our neighbours of the Moslem hareem were all in commotion, and striving to get a view of the man and his organ from the terraces or roofs. So, after enjoying the wonderment of Constantine for a while, we gave the man some piastres and dismissed him. He had worked his way hither as a pilgrim to the holy places, and was lodging at the Casa Nuova. Our neighbours were not so easily satisfied as we had been, and kept the music grinding until Walter was nearly driven to desperation. Reading was impossible, for the sounds were as near as if in our own house. At last the hour came at which, by the convent rules, pilgrims must return for the night, and we were delivered from the annoyance. Some days afterwards we heard him again near the Armenian Convent, a crowd of black-cowled monks gazing and listening.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WINTER COLOURS OF MOUNTAINS—HELANEH'S ILLNESS.

It was the middle of November before any very heavy rain fell. But then it did fall during two days and nights in torrents; not poured upon us from the clouds, but the cloud itself upon us, intercepted all view, and going out was impossible. Poor Helaneh, when she came in the morning to her work, presented a pitiable spectacle; her white sheet drenched through and through. Constantine came back from market saying that there were no vegetables to be got; the peasantry had not come in; the milk-woman brought no milk.

Fortunately for our comfort, we had just obtained and put up an iron stove in the dining-room, and I had laid in good store of fuel,—namely, the roots of old oak-trees, which are dug out of the hills at various distances around Jerusalem, but chiefly in the Hebron district. They give out much warmth, and if a few olive chips are mixed up with them, a very cheerful fire is obtained; for the latter, being saturated with oil, make a sparkling blaze in a few moments.

By the morning of the third day continued rain gave place to smart showers, and in the afternoon the sun shone out brilliantly.

Walter had never yet seen the Moab mountains in their glory. All through the summer their chief beauty had been the dreamy mistiness of outline and

delicate tints, especially in the evening, when we used to measure the time for returning homewards by the height to which the pure blue had risen towards their summit, displaying, as it climbed, the warm violet that played in varying shades over their rocky features. But this evening I knew that all the gorgeous colouring which had so enchanted me last winter would have returned. The sun had gone back far enough towards the south to cast his beams into the ravines, and to bring out the promontories with such distinctness, that the whole range appeared to have suddenly walked forward some score miles. When I went up to my room for the first time during three days without shawls, overshoes, and an umbrella, I saw the promise of a grand sunset. The eastern sky was clear; but in the west lingered heavy masses of cloud, between and among which the sun must pass in sinking to rest. So I persuaded Walter to leave a bit upon which he had been very much engaged, and to come out for a walk.

"If it had only rained one day more I should have finished that."

"True; but that one day more without fresh air might bring on a fit of ague, such as I have left poor Helaneh shivering under. She says it is only ague, but looks miserably uncomfortable under half a dozen blankets, as if she never could be warm again."

We walked towards the Convent of the Cross, for I remembered a spot just off that road to the left, whence a very fine view of the Moab mountains was had,—set as it were between the hill of Evil Counsel on the one

side and the Mount of Olives on the other. I did not let him turn his head that way at all, and indeed he did not think of doing so; he was so delighted with the changing effects upon the clouds before us. Here long-pencilled rays of glory escaping as through a rent in the dark curtain. There heavy masses piled up high against the sky—oh, so perfectly blue!—and flecked higher still with little clouds, scarcely lighter in colour than the black masses beneath, but like them edged with molten gold.

"How very remarkable is the effect upon these rocks, Emily! The rich light appears to sink into and saturate them. It is not merely shining upon them—bathed, yes, that is the word,—they are bathed in its glorious flood! What are you looking at over your shoulder, child?"

We had reached the point I desired, and I faced about. There they were—the old friends of last year in the very perfection of grandeur.

"O Emily! How very wonderful!"

He was as much delighted as I had thought he would be, but much more astonished. After standing a few moments silent, "How very wonderful!" was followed by a deep sigh.

"It is of no use, Emily. They will all laugh at me—say I am stark staring mad if I should succeed in giving anything like those colours in a picture."

"People would say it is greatly exaggerated; but anybody with an eye for beauty would say, nevertheless, that it is a very beautiful exaggeration, and I think

the few who can really feel would say it must be true, because it is so beautiful."

"So very beautiful. Look at the gradations of light: that flood of golden glory on the city walls, and the mellow richness of the hills on the right; and the Mount of Olives, softer and brighter than the rest—what a foreground they make!—the dark pine-trees there just come in to relieve and enhance the rest. And then the middle distance; those receding hills falling too as they recede; how exquisite the gradation of their tints! Talk of coloured shadows, why they are all coloured there. I should just like to bring Merton here, and ask him what has become of his neutral shadows. And the mountains at the back, the farthest and yet the finest feature of all. Oh, look! —look at that part where the sun is now shining!—how magnificent the effect of the heavy shade from that cloud and the splendour on the projecting part, as if hewn out of gold and shaped with ultra-marine! O Emily, I am glad that my mother allowed me to work at painting. I am sure I see more than other people see who are not accustomed to study light and shade and form, and above all, colour, bewitching colour."

"You enthusiastic fellow! But go on, there is no excellence without enthusiasm. I was going to say that looking at such glories is enough to make one a painter; but I have looked at them, and yet I *can't* paint."

"Look at the change of colour. See how pure and

cold the blue that is stealing up the foot of the mountains, chilling in its very perfection! There, it is all over—the enchantment is past. You were a dear creature to tell me nothing of all this. I had no conception of it before, and the surprise has added not a little to the pleasure."

Next day Helaneh did not make her appearance. She sent her little boy to say that she was too ill, still suffering from ague. So I was obliged to do her work for her. Constantine was a tolerable cook, but of housework he had not much idea. In two or three days Helaneh came. The ague seemed gone, but she was weak, and the Christmas fast had begun. I tried to persuade her that for her health's sake she ought to eat; but no—pickled olives, and bread and a little rice boiled in water, were all I could get her to take. As might be expected, the ague returned. The fits had at first come every second day, but now they came every day. I could not get her to take any medicine. At last, one afternoon she was so very ill that I sent for Dr Baron. He said that the ague had turned into Syrian fever, and active remedies must be used. When her little boy came for her as usual, she told him to take his brother and sister to the house of their aunt, and stay there until she got better. Constantine went with them to see them safe there. For two nights she was very ill indeed, and we feared the worst; but after that she began to recover. Sarah was very kind, and came daily to help me in the nursing, and made herself very useful in many ways.

One evening our patient was thought to be out of danger, and as I had been up during three nights, I felt much in need of rest, and asked Sarah to stay. She would not, because it was the eve of Sabbath; but she would come next day, Saturday—not to do any work, but to sit beside Helaneh while I rested. She came early. I wished, before going to rest, to give Helaneh some tea, and desired Sarah to put the kettle on the fire. To my surprise she said she would not; that it was unlawful for Jews to touch fire on the Sabbath-day. For the same reason she refused to carry the lamp into the kitchen, or to touch it, though it had been extinguished for some hours. But she stood by the fire while Constantine made the tea, and then she brought it to me.

When Dr Baron came that evening he said there was nothing further the matter with our patient but weakness, and ordered strong broth to be given to her. Accordingly I had a chicken prepared, and saw some excellent broth made, and brought it to her bedside. "Now, Helaneh, rise and drink."

"What is it, O my lady?"

"Good broth, to make you strong."

"O lady, it is a fast; it cannot be; it is unlawful."

"But the hakim has ordered it. You know you must do as the hakim says."

"No, no—no, no. It cannot be, O lady."

"But you are weak. You will die if you don't eat."

"God is merciful! I cannot break the fast."

"But it does not say in the Anjeel [Gospel] that you are to fast this way."

"I don't know, but I cannot eat; it is unlawful." And not one drop could I get her to touch. I called in Constantine, thinking he might persuade her; but soon saw that although he echoed my words, it was for the sake of pleasing me, and that in heart he considered Helaneh in the right. After spending half an hour in vain efforts to persuade her that she might take the broth just as so much medicine, I was obliged to desist for fear of doing her harm by too much excitement.

When Dr Baron came next day, he shook his head. "She is getting weaker."

I told him about the broth.

"This will never do," he said; "we must send for her priest."

Constantine was despatched for the Greek priest or khury. Dr Baron said he was an amiable man, a native of Jerusalem. He came, and after he had sipped his cup of coffee, Dr Baron, through his dragoman, informed the khury that there was here a patient of his in a dangerous state of weakness after fever; that he had ordered her to take broth, and she refused to take it on account of the Christmas fast of forty days. Could not she be allowed to take the broth as a matter of necessity?

"Surely," said the khury. "I will see her, and tell her that she will commit no sin in obeying the orders of the hakim."

We went to Helaneh. She recognised the khury,

and kissed his hand reverently as he addressed her, "How is thy health?"

"I am ill, O my lord."

"Health to thee," (literally, Peace to thee.)

"God give thee peace, O my lord."

"The hakim tells me that thou art better. God be praised!"

"Inshallah!"

"But thou dost not obey his words."

"O my lord, I have drunk all the medicine."

"Good; thou hast done well. But now he orders that thou shouldest drink broth. Obey his voice, O my daughter. I give thee permission. It is not unlawful. Hast thou understood my words?"

"I have understood."

"Then obey the voice of the hakim, and, Inshallah, thou wilt soon be well."

She said nothing, but tried to make a salaam, which the khury acknowledged by a slight bow, and left the room, and the doctor also went away.

What was my vexation to find that when I brought the broth she still refused to touch a single drop. "But the khury allows it."

"True, O lady; but it is not for the honour of the Virgin. I cannot break the fast."

"But if you don't eat you will die."

"Inshallah, I shall live. My sister made a vow for me to Mar Girius, that if I get well she will burn incense for six piastres before him, and she has burnt three wax candles before the Virgin, blessed be her

name! Fear not, O lady, Inshallah, I shall get well."

"O Helaneh, thou shouldest not pray to the servants when the Master himself is willing to listen. I will pray for thee to Him."

The most trying part of the nursing was to come. Dr Baron expressed very serious fears when he learned that she still refused to take the broth, and desired we should make up as far as possible by arrowroot and wine. Fortunately Mrs Andersen had some gelatine. This we dissolved in tea, and I think it saved poor Helaneh's life. She lingered in a deplorable state of weakness for a long time, but ultimately recovered sufficiently to go home and be taken care of by her sister.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

TRIP TO HEBRON—SHEIKH ABDERAHHMAN.

"Now, Emily, you often make me go out for walks and rides, and this time I shall require that you go out with me, and try if we cannot get rid of that pale face before your turn to be nursed comes. I met a traveller yesterday at the consulate, who is going to Hebron the day after to-morrow. So pack up your traps and we will accompany him."

"At such short notice?"

"Yes; they tell me that there is a Jewish house

where travellers are received, so that, in fact, we have no need of anything but saddle-bags. Mine will carry your wardrobe, and Constantine shall carry provisions."

"And this house?"

"Leave the groom in charge."

No sooner said than done, and by eight o'clock one beautiful December morning we were at the meeting-place, under the terebinth-tree (now bare of leaves) at the north-west of the city wall.

One soon makes acquaintance with a fellow-countryman in a foreign land, and Mr Butler was a bluff, chatty man, full of anecdote and adventure. But Palestine did not please him.

"Jerusalem! it's a wretched place. I don't like it at all. They don't call those streets, I hope. Why, they are worse than lanes in a fifth-rate English town."

"True, the streets are bad; but the views—are not they fine?"

"Not the one on the Jaffa road. I never was more disappointed in my life—a long line of wall, that's all."

"The walls are fine, however."

"Too new-looking. I expected to see something as old as Solomon."

"Have you not seen the old wall on the east side?"

"No; my dragoman did not take me there. Tony!"

"Yes, sir," (from a jovial-looking fellow in Oriental dress, bristling with fire-arms.)

"Why did you not show me the old wall on the east of Jerusalem?"

"Show you when we come back, sir," said Tony, wisely giving no reason.

"That's a capital fellow, that Tony. He has travelled with me for the last year in Egypt and Lebanon, and served me well."

"But for Jerusalem," observed Walter, "a guide somewhat better educated than a dragoman is necessary."

"Oh, I don't care about all the disputes. I mean to look at things for myself, and then read up when I go home."

"But you may miss seeing things for yourself."

"Pray what do you suppose it means in the Bible when it says that this was a land flowing with milk and honey? I see no cultivation anywhere, except in a place or two on the road from Jaffa; and look round —did you ever see anything so bare?"

"This is not the season for it to be green. If you will come again in two months you will see a great difference."

"You don't mean that anything grows on those hills?"

"No; because nothing is planted upon them. There is not population enough."

"Well, then, look at Bethlehem; see how bare it looks."

"You are a little unfair," said I. "Who could say much for the fertility and cultivation of England that only saw it in winter, when all the trees are bare and the seed under the ground? You cannot from this

distance distinguish the vines and figs around Bethlehem, because at present there are no leaves upon them."

"But look at the rocks. What English farmer would tolerate them?"

"An English farmer might learn their value in this climate. Look at yon olive groves. Can anything be finer? and yet you can see by the unplanted part of the mountain that there is no lack of rocks there."

"They are of much use; they preserve the roots of the trees from the heat, and prevent evaporation of moisture."

"Well, all I can say is, that it looks the barrenest land I ever saw."

"Will you come and visit it in spring and summer?"

"Not in summer, certainly, to be scorched up to a cinder."

"Pray, do we look scorched up to cinders, Mr Butler?"

"Not you, certainly," replied he, bowing; "but I mean it is an intolerable climate in summer. Everybody says so."

"But, pray, has everybody tried it?"

"You don't allow that it is very hot in summer?"

"The sun is always hot, but the fresh cool breezes are delightful; just what might be expected on the top of mountains—more than two thousand feet above the level of the sea."

"True; I forgot that you are so high."

"Mr Butler," said Walter, "this country has got an



CAMELS LADEN WITH HEBRON PINE,
Such as used at the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles.

ill name; no matter how, or who gave it, but it has got it; and you know the saying, 'Give a dog,' &c. All I can say is, I am living here, and I don't give it an ill name, but very much the contrary."

"Do you *mean* to say that it ever was a land flowing with milk and honey?"

"I see no reason to doubt that it was. As far as I have been able to judge, the only cause for the bare appearance of the land is the scantiness of the population."

"Does anything grow?"

"Certainly, wherever there is cultivation."

It was curious that during the ride to Hebron, we saw no village until within about an hour of the town. The road wound among pretty little plains, up and down hills, through green shrubby thickets of oak, arbutus, terebinth, and pine—not bare hills, but well clothed with many-tinted foliage; yet there was no cultivation—no trace of man excepting in two places, where were remains of ancient towns.

The air was fragrant with aromatic odours; but there was no sound save the occasional cry of the partridge. The soil was rich, and yet the country was one great solitude. Even our companion was constrained to admit that this would be a fertile district if the hand of man were not wanting. And when we had got among the beautiful vineyards around Hebron, —leafless, it is true, but in excellent condition,—he was no less charmed than ourselves.

As evening drew on, the clear thin air became more

than bracing, and I was not sorry when, just as the stars began to appear, we dismounted at the door of the Jewish quarter. For, strange to say, there is but one entrance to the labyrinth of dwellings in which the Jewish population live as in a rabbit warren. This is for safety, in case of trouble among the rough Hebronite population. Through windings and turnings we were led, until we found ourselves in a room with divans all round, when the mother of the house, comely and healthy, and her tall sons, made us welcome, and soon placed supper before us. Here, for the first time, I saw the little Oriental stool, which serves as table, placed before the guests sitting on the divan, and on it a large brass tray on which the dishes are put. There were one or two antique knives and forks and some spoons, so that we were not quite reduced to eating *à l'Arabe;* but the knives had almost forgotten how to cut.

After the tray was removed a pretty girl brought a brass ewer and basin for the customary ablution, and poured water on our hands. This had scarcely been done before the Governor was announced—Abderrahhmân himself.

Tony had been visiting his worship, and informing him that an English *milord* was here, come with particular recommendations from the Consul, and desirous of Abderrahhmân's assistance in getting to Petra. The Bedawee tribe who lived between Hebron and Petra were allies of Abderrahhmân, and it was necessary to have them as guides. There was a bustle outside, and

clank of swords, then a great shuffling of shoes. Our hostess disappeared. Her son and some Jewish friends of his had run out to receive the dreaded guest. He entered dressed in fine scarlet cloth, and marched up to the seat of honour in the corner of the divan, every part of which was speedily occupied by his train. Walter had described to me his sinister look, but I was not prepared for the ferocious expression of his countenance. His voice was loud. There was cunning in his eye, and it glared every now and then with the light one sees in the eye of a caged tiger. What a wild scene it was! The savage in the corner before whom all the rest trembled—as well his own rude followers, as the poor, humiliated, crouching Jews. I could see the latter start when the sheikh suddenly raised his voice, as it seemed to me for the fun of frightening them. Tony stood with his shoes off at the farther end of the room, and behind him, below the dais, was a crowd of Arabs, armed every one of them, peering and peeping over each other's shoulders at what was going on; their dark features now and then illumined by the flickering light of an oil lamp, which was rendered yet more vague by the clouds of smoke curling and circling from the many pipes.

Tony made the most of his master, and argued his cause well. But the sheikh had sent the Bedawy chief out of the way, and was not going to let him be found until a present of five hundred piastres had been made to himself. He told all sorts of downright lies; and the poor cringing Jews repeated, "True, true!" at the

end of each, though I could see in their faces that what he said was startingly *un*true.

At length the conference broke up. Mr Butler did not intend to give the sheikh the present he demanded, and baffled and angry he marched scowling out of the room, and the Jews tried by every kind of homage to deprecate his wrath. But as soon as he was gone, and they once more breathed freely, they told us how utterly false were all the things which they had themselves confirmed, and gave a pitiful account of the terror and bondage in which they were held.

While they were speaking, our host was called out of the room. After a while he came back: a messenger had arrived from the sheikh to receive a backsheesh for his trouble in coming; and also to say, that some visitors having arrived, he required a quantity of rice, and a loaf of sugar, besides coffee for their entertainment.

These things were immediately sent. They told us it was always thus. When the sheikh required money for war, or for a wedding, food, clothes, sweetmeats, or a bribe to the Pasha—it was always levied upon them.

The gentlemen slept on the divan. I was shown into a little room up-stairs. How strange to be in a town where, excepting ourselves, there is not one bearing the very name of Christian!

Early next morning two young girls, pretty and rosy, entered, one with a tiny broom in her hand. Said the other, "What are you come for?"

"I am come to sweep," and straightway began to do so; but in fact they came to peep at the stranger.

On the breakfast tray the plates were English, of the willow pattern, and on the handles of the knives was scratched a motto in Greek, and therefore most probably bought in the bazaar of Jerusalem.

Meanwhile our hostess spoke Jewish German, being a Russian Jewess, and her son Spanish—the language of his fathers.

After breakfast we walked about and visited the outside of the sepulchre of Machpelah. Several Jewish women were peeping into a hole in one of the huge stones, into which they inserted their fingers, and then kissed them.

Hebron appears a happy, cheerful place, in spite of its fierce governor. We were told that sickness is very little known. All the water is from pure living springs. And how bright the green meadows looked! The merry voices of children at play ringing in the air. How different from the Jewish quarter of Jerusalem!

But the greatest pleasure of all was our visit to the great tree called Abraham's Oak, at a distance of about half a mile from the town; the standing under its glorious boughs, and listening to the murmur of the breeze among its evergreen branches, while looking down the vale of Eshcol towards Hebron.

We had arranged to return to Jerusalem, but left the old tree with the firm intention of some day pitching tents for a while under its delightful shade.

Mr Butler failed to come to terms with the greedy

sheikh; said he would not be humbugged, and gave up the Petra expedition rather than yield to his extortion, so that we all returned together to Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CHRISTMAS.

CHRISTMAS was at hand. There were many things to be done. I was determined to mak a plum-pudding, but Helaneh was not yet well enough to help me. A turkey had been for nearly a month before fattening under the especial charge of Haj Omar, who, besides being groom to our horses in particular, looked upon himself as protector of all other animals in the establishment in general. He peeped in at the cage of my ring-doves every morning to see if I had given them food and water; and even, in the excess of his benevolence, regularly attended to a gazelle hound, which one of his friends had given to Walter, and, unclean beast though it was, allowed the dog to sleep at his feet on the mat which served as his bedstead. He used to talk to the animals, horses and all, and gravely assured me that they could understand what he said.

The turkey was getting on extremely well; when, alas! one morning Haj Omar came with the sorrowful news that it and also one of my chickens had got under the feet of Walter's horse, and had been killed.

I had to consider how this serious diminution of Christmas fare might best be made up. We went out next morning for an early walk, and beheld near the Jaffa Gate a line of camels, the foremost of which bore on their sides cages of geese, who mingled their cackling and screaming in the oddest way with the grunting of the camels. They were come up from Gaza. I despatched Constantine, who managed to buy some of them before the camels had been many moments kneeling in the square. Scarcely was this done when Mrs Andersen's servant appeared with a joint of buffalo beef.

"Why," exclaimed Walter, "that must be a bit of one of the black shaggy fellows I met yesterday being driven up from Jaffa."

And so it was. Girius said that the buffaloes had come in yesterday from Jaffa. Beef was thus provided, and now the plum-pudding only remained to be thought of. Constantine found in the market all that was wanting for it except currants, and these our Jewish baker had got, brought from abroad by some of his friends. There were raisins from the other side Jordan; flour from Samaria wheat; the spice bazaar produced very good and fragrant nutmegs, and cinnamon, and cloves, and allspice, and others whose English names I don't know, brought by the Mecca pilgrims from Arabia; citron, and lemon, and orange from Jaffa, preserved by my Jewess, Sarah; sugar from the West Indies; and part of the tail of a fat sheep pastured on Judean hills. These were some of the ingre-

dients that went to make up my very interesting pudding.

And equally remarkable were the personages concerned in the making. Sarah the Jewess, and Constantine the Greek Arab, and Yakoob an Abyssinian friend of his, who had got leave to spend a fortnight under his tuition, previous to becoming servant in one of the English houses; these, besides my English self, were concerned in the making; while Haj Omar, the Egyptian Moslem, prepared the fire of oak roots, and devoted himself during several hours to keeping the pot boiling.

No less curious were the fruits for our dessert. Oranges and sugar came from Jaffa; apples and walnuts from Damascus; sweet lemons from one of the sheltered valleys of Judah; figs from Bethlehem; dates from Sinai; and almonds from Bethany and Gaza.

The day before Christmas eve was devoted to collecting branches for the ornamenting of the chapel. I joined Mary Andersen and her little friends the Douglasses, and two or three more, at an early hour in the afternoon, and sallied forth into the olive groves north of the city in search of olive branches and of mistletoe, which grows abundantly on the old olive-trees, and bears dark-red berries.

Meanwhile Walter and two or three gentlemen rode to the hills south of Solomon's pools on the Hebron road, in quest of some of the foliage we had lately seen there. They took with them a peasant boy and a donkey, and returned with fragrant spoils,—crimson-

tinted terebinth and feathery pine and oak, (which in this district is evergreen, and has glossy leaves much like holly,) and arbutus in the full glory of its scarlet berries.

The next morning we all met on the church premises, whither the boughs had been sent, in order to arrange them in the chapel. Orange branches had been added from the garden of Mrs Andersen and another friend; and Rachel and her brothers came, each bringing two palm branches which their father had procured.

"How beautiful! They were the one thing wanting," cried we all; and Rachel received such a warm welcome as brought the blushes into her cheeks, and she was fain to put down her palms and take refuge by my side—not, however, before I had time to observe how strikingly lovely she herself was with their wavy plumes meeting all by accident, and drooping over her head. Walter had too quick an eye for beauty to miss this, and I saw by his delighted glance that he had been as much charmed as myself.

And now busy fingers went to work; some held the twine, some formed the wreaths, and others dictated the order in which the various tints were to be intermingled.

"Where shall we put the palms?" asked Mary.

"One on each side of the reading-desk and pulpit, and one at each end of the transept," said one.

"How stiff that will be!"

"Then two and two against the walls."

"Scarcely better."

"I know where they would be best," whispered Rachel to me.

Her idea was to place them around the east window, so as to overshadow the communion table, and the thought was eagerly adopted.

Presently came another of the Jewish converts, bringing a goodly number of cypress sprays.

"Why," cried Walter, "the cypress is a funeral tree."

"Still the cypress spray is used for ornament in this country," replied Mary. "I don't think the natives attach the idea of mourning to it."

"Some sweetmeats were brought to me lately," added Mrs Wells, "and they were ornamented with bouquets of flowers, among which were both myrtle and cypress; and the cones of the cypress as well as the myrtle leaves had gold leaf upon them."

Meanwhile Simeon, the young man who had brought them, had unfolded a paper, which he carried with great care. It contained gold leaf; and it was with difficulty we got him to understand, that according to our taste, the gold leaf would be the reverse of ornamental, especially for a church.

Some were in favour of using the cypress; its dark sprays contrasted well with the light-coloured pine. Others urged the mournful associations with which cypress is connected in English minds.

"But the congregation is not all English," said one; "and in the East one may as well follow Eastern ideas."

Simeon, however, decided the matter by telling how he had, with considerable pains, obtained these sprays from the old trees in the Temple ground. His landlord, being a Moslem and a good-natured man, had gone with him and gathered them, while Simeon stood watching through one of the great gates; and so cypress from the Temple was intertwined with the olive branch of peace and the palm of victory for Christmas tide, in the little chapel on Mount Zion.

And the day of "comfort and joy" dawned fair and summer-like, and the whole congregation assembled, and we sang, "Hark! the herald angels sing." And very peaceful and solemn was the service, and after church many a cordial greeting was exchanged; many a fervent wish uttered on behalf of friends far, far away, who would gladly have joined with us in keeping Christmas day in Jerusalem, and have been with Walter and me as we rode quietly to the brow of the hill, where we could gaze upon the fairest aspect of the town of Bethlehem.

There she lay, the favoured city, sweetly reposing in the evening sunshine. Cloudless and clear was the sky above. The eye involuntarily searched its blue depths, if perchance a ray from the Blessed Star might yet linger there, and the ear listened to catch a note from angel harmonies wafted over yon heights.

There came galloping up the hill-side a gay party of young Christians, returning to Jerusalem after keeping the feast and attending midnight mass the night before. They were armed, and they fired off their guns

and caused their horses to prance, and shouted and made the air ring with their laughter.

Walter sighed. "These have not understood the purpose for which the Prince of Peace was born in Bethlehem."

When the echo of their horses' hoofs died away, we turned toward Jerusalem, and Walter and I sang, "While shepherds watched their flocks by night," to the well-remembered melody that we had been accustomed to hear in days long gone by, when the school children used to come early in the dark, amid the snows of our English Christmas, and sing beneath the window of my father's home.

Mrs Andersen and Mary spent Christmas evening with us, for Mr Andersen was absent. He had gone down to Jaffa to receive the newly arrived bishop, and preparations were being made by the whole congregation for giving him a warm welcome on his reaching Jerusalem. We wished Rachel to have joined our Christmas party, but she would not be persuaded to leave her brothers. However, Rabbi Abraham came for an hour in the evening.

Conversation turned upon the weekly practisings for improving the church singing, in which we all took the greatest interest. There being no organ, it was necessary to trust entirely to the voices, and we were trying to learn part-singing. Abraham had a good voice. He, Walter, and some others managed the bass—Rachel having taught her father the notes,

and something about tune and time. The lessons of Mrs Wells were not thrown away upon her.

"Why not sing instead of talking about singing?" cried Walter. So we sang, "Come let us join our cheerful songs."

"Now for the Christmas Hymn, Miss Russell;" and Mary, Walter, and I sang it in three parts.

"Now, Rabbi Abraham, sing us some of your Hebrew hymns, for we want to learn them."

"Do you know the Adeer Hoo?"

"Not at all; what is it?"

"A hymn which our nation sing at the Passover;" and he sung it,—a wild melody, plaintive, and abounding in minor intervals, yet not melancholy. A beseeching tone ran through it; and it ended in the long-drawn note characteristic of almost all Oriental music.

Silence was not broken until the last vibration had died away.

"How delightful that air would be, Emily, sung by a female voice!"

"Can your daughter sing it, Abraham?"

"Indeed, can she not? My daughter sings everything that she hears once."

"Surely, Mary, you have the music of that," said her mother.

"Yes, I think I have. What are the words, Rabbi Abraham?"

"It is a kind of prayer to the glorious God to build His temple, even in our days, with haste."

"Then I have the notes; it is the very first in the book—'Build Thy Temple speedily.' You shall have it if you please, Miss Russell."

"Thank you. A collection of genuine Hebrew music would be very interesting. Do the Jews write the tunes with notes, Rabbi Abraham?"

"For that hymn I never saw any notes: everybody knows it, and we have no notes like yours; but the accents in the Hebrew Bible are notes, and every synagogue reader can sing by them."

"I thought they were only stops, like our comma and full stop."

"They are more. The greatest words in a verse are marked by them; and they are also for singing by."

He sang for us from a Hebrew Bible. It was not exactly singing, but a species of chanting, very curious; and we made out, from Abraham's description, that each sign represented several notes—a kind of flourish or phrase.

"All the learned Jews understand these. My nephew knows them so well, that if you will show him the accents without the words, he can tell you what verse of the Bible they are from."

"How very ingenious—to make the same signs answer for stops and musical notes also! You must explain to me another time how they mark the chief words; for now I want to hear something about your nephew. Have you seen him again?"

"I have seen him again many times, and he is in much trouble. He often went outside the Jaffa Gate

to meet and talk to me; for he had many questions about the New Testament, and the Law, and the Sabbath, and such things. Two days ago I met him near the Hospital. He only saluted me; but a Jew saw it, and went and informed the others that Judah was seen speaking with the apostate; and they called him before the Beth Din, and asked him many questions. He answered them as well as he could; but he thinks they suspect him about Christianity, and are going to do him harm."

"But he should tell them boldly," said Mrs Andersen, "if he really believes."

"Ah, my good lady, if he does this he will lose his wife; and he loves her very much. I pray for him every day, for it is very hard for him."

"Do you think he does believe?"

"I am sure of it; but some things he does not understand yet. I am very much afraid for him, because I know the Jews will find him out. And now, my good lady, I will bid you good night. Will you excuse me? My children will be waiting for me."

"It is time for us also to be going," said Mrs Andersen; and so our Christmas party broke up. Lanterns were lighted, and our friends bade us good night, and departed along the dark, silent streets.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE BISHOP'S ARRIVAL.

TWO or three days afterwards, Mary came to tell us that an express had arrived from her father at Jaffa, with the tidings that the bishop and his family were to be expected in Jerusalem the next day.

All hands were set to work, decorating his house. The children had gone out to look for cyclamens and crocuses for nosegays for the tables, Others were gathering evergreens to make a triumphal arch over the door, and I was wanted to come and help in its arrangement. A merry group it was, and pretty the result of their labours.

The English and Prussian Consuls were to ride out at an early hour the next morning, and we were all to join in their cavalcade. Walter and I rode to the consulate early next morning.

The whole of the narrow street was blockaded by restless neighing horses, of all shapes and sizes. We judged it prudent to remain at a little distance. Presently there was a stir; the Prussian Consul's kawasses appeared, prancing their horses and brandishing their sticks,—preceding their master, in a resplendent gold-embroidered uniform, epaulettes, cocked hat, feathers, and sword.

At the same instant the kawasses of the English

Consul rushed out of the house, pushed away the other horses right and left, and got those of their master and mistress to the door.

Mrs Wells rode a jet black pony, the Consul a gallant gray. He, as well as the Prussian Consul, was in full uniform.

The train moved on. There was a general scrambling and mounting.

Everybody reached the Castle Square somehow, and there the cavalcade halted. Good mornings were exchanged, and people fell into some sort of order behind and around the civil dignitaries.

Several had gone before, or were to follow, besides a large proportion of others who could only go a short distance on foot. We all got safely out of the city and into the fields.

"Supposing it should rain on those fine uniforms?" said Walter.

"No fear of that," cried Mr Richards, the architect, who had much ado to rein in his hot-tempered bay horse, but little accustomed to the stately pace now required of him. "These clouds are only mist and dew. It is one blessing in this country, one knows what sort of weather one is going to have."

Just as we left the city gate a man ran forward and threw a cupful of coffee on the ground, for the Consul's horse to pass over. Backsheesh came afterwards as a matter of course.

"What are these?" said Walter, checking his horse and picking up something from the ground.

They were black and white quills, dropped by some porcupine.

"I knew that there were porcupines in the country, but never saw any so near the city. This one must live in a hole close at hand," said Mr Richards.

We had turned aside from the stony road, and were passing over good ground among the rocks.

"If you never tasted porcupine, Miss Russell, you must allow me the honour of providing a porcupine dinner for you some day. It is like delicious young pork. You know they live upon fruit and vegetables. The peasantry sometimes bring them in alive in a sack."

"Can the story of their shooting their quills be true, or is it a fable?"

"The peasant who brought me one some days ago showed me some scratches on his leg, which he said were caused by the quills darted at him by the animal. Another curious thing: some of the quills are very much thicker than these, and hollow, and open at the end. They are near the creature's tail; and the man insisted upon it that they are used by the porcupine for taking up water and carrying it home to the young ones—or, as he said, 'its children.' I can imagine no reason for the man saying so unless he at least believed it. Certain it is that these quills are just fit for such a purpose."

"Excepting some plover and blue pigeons, I have not been able to find any game," said Walter. "We heard partridges the other day on our road to Hebron,

and I have once or twice seen gazelles on the hills; but both seem shy."

"Not so shy but that we sometimes get a shot at them," replied Mr Richards; "and then our dogs help us. I'll let you know next time we go shooting. Gazelles give the best sport—down in some of the ravines yonder,"—pointing to the north-west. "Don't the peasantry bring you any game?"

"Never."

"I see how it is; they don't know that you care for it. But they bring us partridges, rabbits, and porcupines, and now and then plover or a snipe. There is a man among the soldiers here—a Turk—who is a capital shot. We generally take him with us when we go out."

"Is this all the winter that we are to have? The past month has been like summer."

"We may have cold weather yet. The real winter here comes in January or February. December is not winter."

"What a delightful country this is to live in—climate as well as everything else!"

"All very well for a while. But I shall be glad to get back to merry old England, where you can depend on your dinner being ready within five minutes of the time it's ordered. I dare say you get on very well, for you have a lady in the house; but we bachelors are worse off; and then one can't make one's servant understand half what one says."

"Don't you speak Arabic?"

"No, nor mean to. What's the use? I know 'bad,' 'good,' 'come,' 'go,' 'bring,' and a few more such words. The coorbaj (whip) does the rest. Nothing like knocking down a fellow for teaching him his duty!"

"I don't agree with you in that," said Walter. "It may be one way of getting on; but I don't believe it's the only way, and certainly not the best way."

"You don't mean to say that a good cuff now and then isn't the only thing they will mind? Now, there's that boy you have got, Constantine; he was my servant once,—a lazy little rascal. I thrashed him three times a week."

"Then you have saved us the trouble, for we never thrash him. I would not demean myself by lifting my hand to another," said Walter.

"When one's angry, one don't stop to think of that. But how do you make them mind?"

"Ask my sister."

"I don't find any difficulty, Mr Richards. I never argue with them, never allow them to argue with me, and if I say a thing I keep to it. They seem to be afraid of that. Constantine once transgressed an order, and I told him the next time I should fine him ten piastres, and I did so. He has never disobeyed again."

"Ah, I see! You appeal to their pockets. Well, certainly that is an argument all-powerful with an Arab. Is it more elevating than mine?"

"I don't *merely* appeal to their pockets, Mr Richards."

"Have you never observed that Arabs are always counting money? I know enough of their detestable language to find out that. Pass a group of people where you will—sitting by the wayside, two walking on the road, smoking on the dunghill of their own village—it is always the same—counting, counting, counting. There! listen to those men."

Two fellahheen were walking past, and certainly they were counting—"Eighty and fifty, that's one hundred and thirty; and twenty?" "Is one hundred and fifty," responded the other.

"Now, I mean to say, Miss Russell, that every Arab is like those two fellows, for ever thinking of money. You watch and you'll find it so."

"Not quite always; for my two servants were disputing for at least an hour, as to which was the greatest, Mar Girius or Mar Saba; the one being patron saint of my woman-servant's late husband, the other of Constantine's brother. But even supposing that they do think of nothing but money, what does that prove?"

"That they are a covetous, lazy set. Liars we all know they are; and as for the laziness, nothing but the whip will get that out of them."

"We know that lying is the vice of an oppressed people," said Walter; "their laziness may be accounted for by the ease with which they can obtain a mere livelihood. Offer them a sufficiently powerful motive for being industrious, and I imagine the laziness will disappear. I should say the same about their perpetual thinking of money. When they find that there are

other interesting things in the world, money won't engross their minds."

"And pray, Mr Russell, what motive can you possibly offer an Arab for being industrious?"

"I will answer your question by another. Have not you got one or two pretty good masons in your employ?"

"Only two."

"Well, what made those two? not the whip, I suppose? Come, confess; was it not better rate of pay as they improved?"

"There you go again, appealing to the pocket."

"And why not—in the beginning at least? Are both your men equally clever?"

"No; Anton is the best by far."

"Good. Would he be pleased if you were to ascribe some of his work to the other, or to point out a stone hewn by the other as Anton's work?"

"That's just what did happen yesterday, and I thought Anton would have knocked us both down in his indignation."

"There you have a motive. That fellow is proud of his work, and that feeling is capable of cultivation."

"I tell you what, Mr Russell; you're cutting blocks with a razor. Depend upon it, the Arabs are radically bad like the Jews. They have a different nature from other people; a depraved nature, that no good will ever come out of."

"That is new doctrine to me, especially about the Jews."

"Of course they 're not like us. You don't mean to tell me that Jews have the same feelings as we have."

"Hath not a Jew"—I began.

"That 's poetry, Miss Russell—Shakespeare wrote poetry—and won't do in an argument."

"How do you know that they have not the same feelings as we? Have you ever tried them? How many Jewish friends have you?"

"Not one. I keep clear of them altogether; but everybody says as I do."

"I suspect the everybody you mean must also do as you do, keep clear of them altogether."

"It 's the wisest way, Miss Russell, so long as they are under the curse."

I was going to reply to this by asking whether the best way of helping a drowning man was by leaving him in the water till he could get out by himself, but was prevented by Walter exclaiming, "There 's a stir there among the advanced guard. I wonder if they can see the bishop's party coming."

The long-expected travellers were seen winding slowly up the road towards us. We could distinguish the bishop, because his chaplains, Mr Andersen and another, rode on either side of him.

The stragglers of our party now rejoined the ranks. The two Consuls placed themselves side by side, on the brow of the hill, and the bishop was greeted and welcomed, at first formally, but then with cordial warmth; and the procession was arranged, and began to move towards the city.

Several kawasses had been sent by other Consuls as a mark of respect, to ride before the train. His lordship was supported on either hand by the Consuls, and the other gentlemen grouped themselves around his lady. The party was now very large, and received momentary additions as we approached the city.

There was a large concourse of spectators—Jews, Moslems, Greeks, Armenians, Latins, and white-sheeted women. Near the gates a small group of Abyssinians, dark-visaged and wearing garments of indigo blue colour, came forward to greet the bishop, who had formerly been a missionary in their country. It was pleasant to see their childish glee when he conversed with them in their own language. Among the next group stood Abraham and Rachel, with the two little boys. Not far off, among a knot of others, was a young Jew, looking earnestly upon the scene. It was Judah, Abraham's nephew. I had not seen him since the adventure at Rachel's sepulchre, and was struck at the careworn expression in his face. He was much altered. His cousins did not appear to know him at all, and he carefully avoided any recognition of his uncle. The bishop had desired that the congregation should meet him in the chapel, and thither we all went. The chapel was full, and hearty and thrilling were the responses to the Te Deum and in the Litany, and intense the interest with which the bishop's first words to his people were received.

CHAPTER XL.

JUDAH'S IMPRISONMENT.

QUIET days pass swiftly away, if they be not idle days. Walter was absorbed in his picture, and I could scarcely get him to leave it at meal-times.

"Five minutes more, dear. I cannot leave it yet;" and the five minutes would become twenty, and still the bit was not perfect. "One little touch, Emily; the depth of those eyes is so difficult to give. If they were but sparkling, I could do it at once."

He was endeavouring to render the soft melancholy light in the dark eyes of his Ruth; and it *was* very difficult, so black were they, and yet so mild. He had been patiently labouring at this bit for many days, and was becoming almost irritable at the slowness of his progress, though I encouraged him with all my might, for indeed he was succeeding admirably. But it is very difficult for a workman to judge of his own success, especially if his ideal of perfection be true,—the sense of beauty which God has planted in our hearts goes so far beyond our power to express or to render. Walter only thought of what he desired to accomplish; but I could see how far he had already succeeded in transferring to his canvas the thoughts present to his imagination.

The one little touch had been given, and two and

three and four beside. He raised his brush to the palette; he had forgotten that I was standing beside him. I laid my hand upon his and detained the brush. "You naughty brother! There are my poor anemones all unfinished, waiting for the rest of the flowers; and if we do not go, the clematis will be past its beauty." My point was gained. He put away the painting, and we went out to look among the rocks near the Tombs of the Judges for some bell-shaped clematis. I had seen its dark glossy leaves festooning the rocks there at about this time last winter, but there was only a single blossom left. Bunches of feathery seed had replaced the flowers, and lay like snow-flakes among the leaves. This year I wanted to get some of the flowers; their delicate bells, tinged with the faintest green, would make such a lovely contrast to the scarlet anemones which I had been drawing.

We found them in full beauty, and Walter gathered long wreaths and hung them around my horse's neck, and fastened drooping bunches at his ears; and he shook his pretty head, and seemed quite aware of the compliment.

"What is that lovely blue, just at your feet?"

Walter had mounted, but jumped off again just in time to prevent his horse stepping upon some grape hyacinths which were peeping above the soil. "There, Emily, that rich tint is the very thing wanting for your group, and the almost black of the lower part will relieve the rest."

"What a peculiar scent flowers have in which this

very deep blue appears! Both this and the mandrake have it."

As we drew near the Jaffa Gate we met Abraham walking fast. "Sir, I was looking for you. I have been to your house, and the servants told me you were out riding."

"Is anything wrong? Has anything happened to Rachel or the boys?"

"No, sir, not that; but my nephew is in trouble. He is in prison."

"In prison! Why?"

"Here!—he has sent me this letter."

Walter dismounted, and took the scrap of paper from Abraham. "I cannot read this; it is Hebrew."

"I beg your pardon; I am so confused that I forgot. He says that they again called him suddenly to the Beth Din, and began to ask him whether he has any dealings with me. He, of course, did not want to answer, and then they brought witnesses: one, the Jew who saw him salute me near the hospital; and another, who says we made signs to each other on the day the bishop arrived."

"I saw your nephew that day, and he seemed not even to look at you."

"It is no matter if he did or not; two witnesses are enough. But this is only the beginning. After they had heard this they began to push him and revile him, and there fell out of his bosom one of our Hebrew prayer-books, which I lent him only yesterday. He was afraid to leave it in his house, and carried it in his

bosom; and so it happened. Then they all fell upon him, and have put him in prison, to make him divorce his wife."

"Where is he imprisoned?"

"At the Austrian Vice-Consul's."

"I thought he was a Russian."

"Yes; but the Russian emperor does not allow Jews to come to this country, so he got away over the frontier without any passport, and in Austria he got an Austrian passport."

"And who is the Austrian Vice-Consul?"

"A Jew, sir; and that is what I want you to help us in. Can you come with me to Mr Wells, and help me to explain it all, and perhaps he will help us?"

"To get your nephew out of prison? I will go with you, certainly."

"Not so much to get him out of prison, sir, but to see if they can make him divorce his wife by force."

"Surely they cannot do that. Does she wish it?"

"I don't know, ma'am; but if her husband has only time to explain to her, perhaps she will not wish it."

"At any rate, let us go at once to Mr Wells and see what he can do."

Mr Wells was at home, and the case was soon explained. "I fear there is very little that I can do for your nephew, Rabbi Abraham. If his passport was Austrian, he is certainly under the authority of the Austrian agent."

"But the agent is a rabbi, sir. And again, can the poor man be obliged to divorce his wife?"

"Possibly, according to foreign law. If the marriage was a Jewish and not a civil one, he may be required to annul it at the bidding of the rabbis, and if his wife should herself desire it. How were they married? Before a magistrate or before the rabbis?"

"Before the rabbis, sir."

"Then, I fear, the rabbis will have power to dissolve the marriage."

"But if she should not desire it? Could not some one go and ask her?"

"That would be best; but who could go?"

No one seemed able to answer this question. Presently Mr. Wells asked if Abraham had informed Mr Andersen of the case. "Not yet."

Meanwhile, Abraham went and consulted Mr Andersen, who immediately wrote a letter to Rabbi Isaac; but he also was inclined to believe that Judah would be obliged to give the divorce. Mr Andersen also went next day and visited Rabbi Isaac, and endeavoured to obtain consent to his visiting Judah's wife, and ascertaining from herself if she wished to be divorced. But this was in vain. Abraham, however, was indefatigable, and went to the Prussian Consul to get him to write a note to Rabbi Isaac, backing up Mr Andersen's request to see the wife and ask herself; and, to the great joy of us all, a civil message was brought that Mr Andersen might visit her next day if he pleased. Abraham entreated so earnestly to be allowed to go too, and speak to her in her own language, that Mr Andersen consented. They went; and were met at

the door of the house with the tidings, that during the night a son had been born to Judah, and that his wife was not well enough to receive any one. The beating of small drums by way of rejoicing filled not only the house, but the whole street.

Abraham knew that we were impatient to hear whether they had succeeded in learning her own wish, and came immediately to tell us.

"I have bad news, my dear lady."

"I am sorry; what is it?"

"Judah's wife has a son born last night."

"Has anything gone wrong with the mother?"

"Oh no; she and her son are well."

"Then how can you call this bad news? Surely it will rejoice your nephew's heart to hear of his son's birth."

"Ah, my dear lady, that is just the worst. I fear he will never see his son."

"How so, Abraham? No one can prevent his seeing his own child."

"I am afraid—I am afraid," said Abraham, shaking his head, "that now, if she did not wish it before, Judah's wife will ask for a divorce for the love of her child."

"But she loves her husband, you say?"

"She does love him; but the love of a new-born child is strong, and it is her first, and she will surely be frightened at the thought of his becoming a Christian like his father. I am afraid that now, for the sake of her son, she will give up her husband."

"Poor Judah! How is he?"

"He is ill. Mr Andersen never rested to-day till he had got to see him. He told him of his son's birth; but instead of rejoicing, he wept."

"Then he also fears that his wife will now leave him."

"Certainly. He has done one thing which may help him. He has sent a petition to the Consul-General in Beyrout, to be allowed to see his wife for three or four weeks, until she has time to judge for herself if they cannot still be happy together. And now we must wait for the answer to come back."

At least ten days must pass before any answer could be expected from Beyrout. We heard from time to time that the mother and infant were doing well, and that Judah's purpose of becoming a Christian was fixed; but that he was ill, and extremely depressed.

CHAPTER XLI.

ENGLISH TRAVELLERS—WINTER SUNSHINE AND RAIN.

ONE Sunday morning, just before service began, a large party of naval officers walked into church. English they all were unmistakably. What a thrill the sight of their honest faces gave us! And the interest was not diminished when we learnt next day that the cap-

tain was a nephew of the hero Sir John Moore. We were invited to meet them at the consulate the next evening, and most pleasant it was to be among so many of our countrymen. They had been riding about the country as only sailors can ride, and were going to run off next morning to the Jordan—so Walter told me as we walked home.

"They want me to go with them, Emily."

He did go, and came back the second evening after in great spirits, caught partly, I suppose, from his merry naval companions. We had had rain up in Jerusalem; but they had escaped by reason of the much lower level of the Jordan plain.

The day but one after Walter's return, we were to spend the evening at the consulate; but the rain came down in such torrents that I was obliged to stay at home. Walter, however, wrapped himself up and braved the storm.

Strange! the sound of rushing water in every direction, not only into the well, but down the streets in smart cascades. It overpowered everything else. And although, as it became late, I was listening for his footsteps, I heard them not, nor the opening of the outer door, nor even his crossing the court,—nothing until the door of the sitting-room opened, and his dripping figure made its appearance.

"What a night!—'twas well you stayed at home, dear. I had almost to swim to get there; the streets are like rivers."

"How clean the city will be after it!"

"Delightful! I am glad I went though. Guess who was there from Europe?"

"How can I guess who comes here from Europe?"

"True. First, then, a nice old English gentleman, none other than Mr Broadwood, of pianoforte celebrity! And then an original-looking little lady in black, with a coloured handkerchief pinned round her head; very vivacious, although she looks aged. There was a large group round her listening to something very interesting,—'Then they drew up a rope-ladder, and so we climbed up, and I wrote my letter, and it was answered from within a diving-bell at the bottom of the sea.' This was the veritable Miss Talbot, who had climbed up to the top of Pompey's Pillar, and here she was giving an account of it in Jerusalem!"

"How did she get here?"

"In as original a way as you might expect from such a person: all alone; across the desert from Egypt; unable to speak a word of Arabic. But she told how she carried a bag of tobacco with her, and when her Bedaween behaved well she gave them some, and when they did not please her she punished them by giving them none. She laughs at the idea of danger. To-morrow she is going with a party of Russian pilgrims to the Jordan."

"In this weather?"

"Yes, in this weather. Nothing daunts her. She 'has a Mackintosh, and rain can't get through a Mackintosh;' and nothing could persuade her that it would be better to wait for fine weather. 'I mean to go again

after Easter, when it is fine; but I want to see what the country looks like at present.' Somebody warned her that the Jordan is a dangerous stream, and very swift; on which she told him how she had once jumped into the sea from the deck of the ship, and saved a young lieutenant's life who was drowning. She could swim, and was not afraid of the Jordan."

"What a singular person!"

"Yes; but still there is nothing masculine about her. It was impossible to avoid smiling, when, on a party of travellers coming into the room, she recognised a relation in a smart young gentleman, and before he suspected what was coming, she kissed him then and there. Altogether the assemblage was a strange medley. My Polish acquaintance of Jericho was there. He has been frightened out of spending Lent in the wilderness, because one of his Arab guides during the night rolled over the edge of the precipice, and was dashed to pieces; so the Pole hurried back to Jerusalem. The Sardinian, French, and Prussian Consuls were there; and among the travellers were people from India, and Scotland, and England, and America. Empty heads some of them. I cannot conceive what brings such people to Jerusalem."

"The rage for travelling."

"Or the rage for wasting money. One does not mean to go to the Mount of Olives—'it's not worth while;' another asked if there were any Jews in Jerusalem; another, if the *Greek* Jews that live at Bethany* believe the tomb of Lazarus to be genuine! and one

* Bethany is a Moslem village.

actually—but he was not an Englishman—did not 'know that our Saviour was born at Bethlehem, and confessed that he had no Bible with him—he did not know it would be useful."

"How dreadful!"

"I asked myself, again and again, 'Can this be in Jerusalem?' and finally got into a fit of the blues, and was going to leave the room, when Mr Douglas tapped me on the shoulder. 'Mr Woodroffe here has been looking for you; he is a college friend of an acquaintance of yours.' We then had some quiet and really profitable talk about Jerusalem, and its state and prospects. He is a clergyman, and would gladly devote some time to this country, but he does not think it right to do so merely for pleasure."

"But surely it need not be for pleasure only."

"Why, what could he do?"

"Help Mr Andersen and the other clergy here."

"That's not a bad idea, Emily; but I suppose it would come too late, for I believe he goes away tomorrow morning."

"It is incomprehensible to me that people who could stay longer should be content with three or four days in Jerusalem."

"So it is to me. But I daresay it would be otherwise with some,—at least if they felt that they could fill up their time usefully."

"Why, the mere seeing Jerusalem would fill up three months at the very least, and——but you will laugh at me."

"Why should I?"

"I think—I really do think I could point out useful employment for any number of really sensible industrious people here."

"It is too late to-night to ask what 'really sensible' means; but I think you may be right, Emily. This country is an immense unworked mine in many respects, and would richly repay the 'sensible workman.' And now let me put this Mackintosh over you for your voyage up to your bedroom, and I will carry the lantern."

"Can there be a finer climate in the world?" exclaimed Walter next day. "This delicious day is worth coming all the way from England to see. What a burst of enchanting spring after the rain! Come, Emily, put on your hat and we will go out. I have done as much as I can manage to-day, and I want to get that Greek inscription about Thecla, and see what Mr Douglas and I can make of it."

This was an inscription over one of the tombs in the valley of Hinnom, and thither we went. It was a balmy exquisite day, of soft air and bright sunshine. All along Gihon and the slopes of Hinnom, parties of pleasure were out under the trees; the men in groups by themselves, dancing in their fashion, with measured clapping of hands and shrill flutes heard between the intervals of chorus shouting. One party was before us on the top of Zion's hill, with gay Greek costumes of scarlet, white, &c., &c. Another party was walking among the olives below us, behind rocks, so that, although we could not see them, we could judge of

their distance by the receding or approaching sounds. Single persons were running about the rocks to catch the view of the procession from different points. The two parties seemed to take pleasure in replying to each other across the valley, and passengers upon the roads joined for friendship in the simple chorus and clapping of hands. There were brilliant green patches of rising corn about the landscape, and the serious olives interspersed; and loveliest of all, the delicate blossoms of the almond-trees, white and glistening in the sunshine, or blushing faintly, as they opened their unaccustomed eyes to the glories of the day.

Groups of women in their white sheets were also abroad, and were enjoying themselves in their own way —smoking narghiles, or sending each other high up in swings which they had tied among the branches, while their companions stood by, sounding the shrill el-el-el-el-el-lu-u, and little kettle-drums were vigorously beaten by the black slaves. Here sat a group of Moslems, white and green turbaned; there, were a few Greek priests, walking and chanting in their nasal manner; at a distance, by themselves, a Jewish party, men and women all together, chatting and smoking; here was a flock of goats, and there a skittish young colt loose among the barley. Walter found his inscription, and while he was copying it I sat on a rock watching the varied scenes.

The reverberation of the joyous shouts across the valley, and up from Hinnom and down from Gihon, reminded us forcibly of the transaction described in

1 Kings i. 40, 41, when the popular shouting for the proclamation of King Solomon at Gihon—there, in sight, upon our left—alarmed the feasting party of his rival Adonijah at En-rogel—down there, in the depth on our right—and might even have been heard by the aged David in his palace upon the crown of the hill before us.

Returning home by a circuitous path over the crest of the western hills, we came upon the mound of rubbish which had been thrown out there after the fire of the Holy Sepulchre Church in 1808, and I picked up a good many little coloured and gilt mosaics which had formed the mosaic paintings of the saints and scriptural subjects in that church.

What a variety of wild flowers I also brought home from this ramble!—cyclamen, anemone, and iris—daisies, stocks, eyebright, pimpernel, marigold, speedwell, star of Bethlehem, camomile, and vetches, a sort of little forget-me-not, fumitory, and others beside.

The weather remained thus for more than a fortnight, and each day added to the loveliness of the landscape, the variety of the flowers, and the richness of the green corn-fields. At last we had almost summer heat, and people began to complain that the wind was sirocco, (which means *east*;) and that more winter, that is, more rain, was required for both crops and cisterns.

In the course of one hot hazy day, however, there was a change. I was sitting with doors and windows open, when suddenly a sweeping driving sound came, as of a great rush of wind. All the windows and doors

at opposite, indeed at all sides of the house, commenced furious banging about. Walter had only time to snatch up his pocket-handkerchief and fling it over his picture, before a cloud of dust covered everything; the sirocco had suddenly changed into a north-west wind, which drove all before it. Blinding sand filled the streets, and everything that was light enough to fly was tossed and driven by the eddying currents in every corner of the courts and streets. This lasted for some hours. It was very curious to watch the clear sky in the direction of the wind, and then look eastwards and see the heavy sirocco piled up like a huge bank, and being driven back by main force whence it had come. No Moab mountains were visible, and even the Mount of Olives looked dim for some time.

All that day the wind blew, and all that night, till it became a perfect hurricane; and all the next day nothing was to be heard but furious wind. One could almost see it as it swept over the city. And a haze overspread the landscape, and the whistling and rushing filled one's ears and one's very mind. Gradually during the night it veered westwards; and in the morning clouds appeared, and almost as soon as they appeared they came down upon us in deluges of rain. But still the storm raged, and the rain ceased, for the clouds were fiercely hurried past, and had no time to rain, held up as they were and driven by the furious wind. At last towards evening it rained again, and presently the rain turned to hail, large enough to make crossing the court very undesirable while it lasted; and this weather continued

that day and the next night, and the next day and the day after that—raining, blowing, hailing by turns, or all at once—and the water poured into the cisterns; and we resumed our warmest winter garments, and lit the fire, and were thankful that we were not obliged to leave the shelter of home.

Helaneh had been unable to come since the first day of the rain; but Constantine cheerfully did her work as well as his own, at least so much of it as I did not do myself. He looked a funny figure bringing in the dinner, all covered up as much as possible from the rain, and himself in a rough, shaggy jacket, with a hood for the head, which he had just bought from an Armenian pilgrim.

We drew near the fire, and speculated as to what the people out in the country could be doing in such inclement weather. "Not only the people, but their animals. I pity the poor camels; they must be most miserable! Cold and wet, the very opposite of what they are made for."

"The Arabs may keep themselves warm huddled up in their hovels; at least they take good care to keep the air out, as I saw the other day at Bethany. There is not a cranny left open. I should think they are in more danger of stifling than of being too cold."

"How they do become accustomed to smoke! They can see well where our eyes are blinded. I found that out the other night at Jericho, where I first tried the blessings of a wood fire in the middle of the room. The Arabs didn't mind it a bit."

"That may partly account for the shrivelled, smoke-dried appearance of most of the old women."

"Say *all*, Emily—a set of old hags; why, every village would furnish a dozen portraits for the Macbeth witches!"

"The Moslem villages; but in Bethlehem, and even Bait Jala, they are not half so bad."

"True; there is an immense difference. Shall I put on another log?"

"No; it is bed-time, and there is a lull just now, so I had better run up-stairs."

I had scarcely reached the top of the steps, when another burst of wind blew out my lantern; and down came the hail and rain again, and did not cease until I went to sleep. After some hours I awoke. The wind had fallen; there was only a low sighing, as if it were weary; and the rain and hail too had ceased. What a delicious quiet after the five days' hubbub! I lifted my head from the pillow on purpose to listen to the stillness, and that peculiar sighing seemed only to increase it.

CHAPTER XLII.

SNOW.

NEXT morning, as usual, the first thing on getting up was to look out of my window at the Mount of Olives. I always liked to greet it. It had been, and still was, as

a friend to me. But oh the surprise! It was covered with snow,—white from the foot to the very top,—white all over, every little edge and terrace marked out in snow, every tree hung with pure soft wreaths; and how very beautiful they were!

It did not at first occur to me that Jerusalem also must be under snow; and I had a fresh surprise, when on endeavouring to open my door to go down-stairs, I found drifted snow piled up in it; and, looking beyond, saw every dome and every minaret between the Castle and the Great Mosque all white. And the crennelled battlements of the city walls were marked out in snow, and the palm-trees could no longer toss their crest in the breeze, for the snow-flakes had come down gently one by one, like good deeds unfelt and unheeded, so lightly did they fall and rest upon each wavy plume, until the proud trees were fain to bow and bend beneath the weight, so soft, so beautiful and pure.

How strange it was to see the orange-tree in a neighbouring court, its golden fruit peeping out from among the snow, and here and there a dark glossy leaf that would not be covered with white.

And beyond the walls the country too was white. The hills seemed to have come nearer, I suppose because of the uniformity of their new vesture; there was no variety of tint, or shade to mark distances. But the Moab mountains were gone; a dense lead-coloured curtain seemed to have fallen between us and them, and to have filled up the Jordan Valley.

I forgot the cold in the novelty of the scene, till

the wind rising, snow began to fall, and reminded me not only that it was very cold, but that breakfast had to be prepared. How to get down-stairs! Every step was obliterated, and from my door down to the terrace was one inclined plane of snow.

There was a sound of shovelling in the court below, and in a minute more, Walter and Constantine appeared at the bottom of my flight of steps. "We have come to dig you out. Is not this glorious, Emily? They never told us that snow was coming."

"I suppose they did not know it themselves. Do come up here and look at the Mount of Olives!"

"That's just what I am going to do, as soon as I have made a road for you."

"Poor Constantine's white calico trousers look rather cold in the snow."

"Oh, I have been giving him a backsheesh to go and get some warm ones from the Armenian pilgrim who sold him his jacket, and he is warm already in expectation."

When Walter once got up on my terrace, I could not get him down again, and was obliged to leave him there, taking in the fresh beauties of Jerusalem under snow, while I ran down myself to prepare breakfast; for, of course, there would be no Helaneh to-day; and there was no milk either, because the road from Siloam was stopped up with snow, and there were no vegetables for dinner for the same reason. But we breakfasted very well without milk, and I made up for the want of vegetables by a grand dish of lentiles soup—

just the very thing for a winter's day, and more delicate in flavour than English pease-soup.

It had been set smoking on the table, and Walter was putting by his things after a good morning's painting, when a footstep was heard in the court, and in came the surgeon of the hospital.

"You have braved the weather, Mr Benson?"

"Yes; it is very good for those who are strong and well. You are going to dine, and I will not detain you, but at once explain my errand."

"On no account," cried Walter, who heard the last words as he entered the room; "you will join us in some hot soup before you explain any errand whatever. This is the East, you know, and Constantine, the servant there, would be worse than scandalised if we let you go away from our dinner-table." And Walter allowed no errand to be explained till dinner was ended and coffee had been served.

"And now, Miss Russell, as I obeyed your brother before dinner, you will allow me to tell you what brought me here to-day. I have seen so many cases of extreme misery in the course of my visits in the Jewish quarter, that I cannot rest, but wish to try if the Europeans who live here cannot do something at least. The snow has shut all the poor into their houses. There is nothing to be earned, and I have found wretched creatures ill of fever and of ague—no food, no fire, perfectly destitute in their miserable dwellings."

"Is there much of this in the Jewish quarter, Benson?"

"So very much, that the sight of the vast mass of

hopeless distress makes me depressed and ill by the time my day's round of medical visits is over. The present cold is carrying off scores, chiefly of the aged and young, who, on account of a long-continued course of unwholesome food, fall a ready prey to the destroyer. But I have not come here to make general statements, but to ask for a little assistance for some of my poor patients. In one house near the slaughtering place I found a poor Jew and his child lying in a room without one single article of furniture, and the father quite blind. They are both suffering from fever occasioned by bad food and poisoned atmosphere."

"I have often, Mr Benson, wondered about the agues and fevers in Jerusalem. The situation of the city is so fine, the climate ought to be good."

"True, and in some parts there is much less malaria than in others. It is engendered in the Jewish quarter by the slaughtering place,* the open drains, the broken and uncleaned cisterns, and heaps of refuse only cleared away once a year, at Easter. In the Arab houses, it is very common to set apart a room for rubbish, and when it is full, to wall it up and begin another. I was in a house yesterday where they had as many as five rooms thus devoted to dirt; and now when the rain falls and soaks in, they become so many manufactories of poisonous vapour."

"Why do the Jews not clean their houses and cisterns?"

"On account of their extreme poverty. I find that

* Now removed outside the city.

thirty shillings a year is thought a good allowance for one person from the Synagogue Fund."

"Can they not work for their bread?"

"Who is to employ them? Greeks and Latins won't, and Moslems don't pay. Shall they employ each other; the starving feed the starved? I know a poor Jewish shoemaker. He went the other day to Hebron and back, (a distance of about forty miles,) to earn five piastres. His daily earnings are about two piastres, or fivepence, and he is thought fortunate. But I must not forget the poor family I came more particularly to speak about. I was called up at two o'clock this morning to visit a Jewess, and found her and her new-born babe lying *on the snow* literally. They had no bed whatever. The father is a miller. He has made the mill with his own hands, and has hired a little open court in which he has put it up, and part of this court is divided off by a few boards. Here I found the poor woman and her infant, and two other children, lying on the snow, and the poor father driving a half-starved horse round and round in the mill, to earn a few pence to buy bread. They had nothing whatever to eat, and no covering." *

"Emily," said my brother, "we must see to this, it is terrible. Do you really mean to say that such cases are common, Benson?"

"I mean to say, Mr Russell, that if you will join me only one day in my medical visits, you shall judge for yourself. But what can you expect?* There is a

* The above are real cases, strictly true.

population of thousands—men, women, and children, without any means of livelihood. They have spent their little all in coming to Jerusalem, and cannot go away if they would."

"Can no remedy be applied?"

"Yes; give them employment."

"How could one employ so many thousands? My sister here does give work to a few Jewesses."

"I have discovered that. A poor creature whom I visited in a sort of dungeon, three feet by five, with no light or air but what came in through a door, under a dark archway, was trying, in spite of an ague fit, to do some sewing, and I found out it was for Miss Russell."

"What was her name?"

"Leah. She is blind of one eye—bad food has caused this."

"Poor Leah! she is ill then? I have not seen her these ten days, and feared something was wrong."

"Send her something, Emily. Ill, half-blind, and in a dark hole like that, her sewing won't be worth much."

I gave Mr Benson a small sum; but my fund was nearly exhausted, there was but ten shillings left, and Walter emptied the purse for the other two cases of which Mr Benson had spoken.

"But Miriam and Rifkah are coming on Friday morning to bring home work, and must be paid."

"I will be your banker so far, Emily."

"And next week?"

"The mail is due. We must hope that your store will be replenished by some of our English friends."

"These poor creatures are in immediate need, Miss Russell," said Mr Benson; "the miller's wife can scarcely live unless some bedding and a few necessaries are provided for her; and the blind man and his child are in very great distress."

"True; it is not right to reserve when there is such pressing need; but I have several regular workers, and my fund is now all gone."

"You know the story of John Wesley, Miss Russell, who was willing to have given all he had to a poor man who met him and a friend as they were walking to preach a sermon; but his friend suggested prudence, and so Wesley gave only one pound, being the half of what he had got. After a while a person met them, and, asking if his name was not John Wesley, put into his hands a paper which contained four pounds. 'O brother!' cried Wesley; 'if you had only allowed me to give the other pound, we should have received eight. The Lord has returned fourfold, and that speedily.' And now I will say good-bye and see what I can do, before it gets dark, for my poor friends the millers. When will you join me in my rounds, Mr Russell?"

"To-morrow if you please."

"Oh no, Walter! You can do no good to the poor by exposing yourself,—wait till the snow is over."

"If you had a long purse at command, Mr Russell, you should come to-morrow; but I think your sister is right. Wait till the snow is over. You will see misery enough, never fear. There is no hope of its disappearing with the snow. Good-bye." And the

kind little man went off cheerily upon his errand of mercy.

Walter accompanied him one day in his visits to the sick and needy, and came home very deeply impressed with what he had seen. He told me but little, however. "Description is of no use, Emily. Let us *do* all we can, and by next post I will write to every one who is likely to help us. So long as we live in Jerusalem, let us do what we can."

As for me, while doing all the little we could to relieve some of the most wretched,—I could not help thinking, again and again, upon the strange chain of circumstances which had shut these starving thousands within the walls of Jerusalem,—while without the city stretched miles and miles of land, bare and desolate for lack of people to cultivate it. And the more I thought, the more wonderful did it seem. Could no plan be devised by which the starving people might be enabled to get bread out of the waste land? But I must go back to the evening of Mr Benson's visit.

CHAPTER XLIII.

SUFFOCATION BY CHARCOAL—COMPULSORY DIVORCE.

THERE was no more snow that night; but it was very cold, and Mr Benson's account made us doubly appreciate the comforts of our snug room and warm fireside.

When bed-time came, Walter and Constantine had to open a path for me to go up-stairs, for they were snowed up.

Next morning, I got up early as usual. It seemed rather strange that I could hear no one stirring down-stairs; but Helaneh was not in the house to clatter about on the stones with her wooden pattens. I thought little about it, and supposed that Constantine's and Haj Omar's footsteps were not heard on account of the snow.

But just as I had finished dressing, and was about to go down, I was startled by a violent knocking at the kitchen-door; and then the groom's voice was heard calling, "Constantine, Constantine! open. Why do you sleep so late? open!" And then came more knocking—and the old Egyptian (always rather testy) was talking to himself and scolding at Constantine, as he went down-stairs. On seeing me, he knocked again, and kicked the door, as if he would break it in. But still Constantine neither answered nor moved.

Walter had come out to see what the noise was about. "There must be something the matter, Emily. I hope he is not ill."

A vague fear crossed my mind; for, indeed, had he been merely asleep, the noise must have awakened him. "Constantine is a light sleeper, Walter."

"Break the door, Haj Omar, perhaps he is ill;" and so saying, my brother took up the largest log he could find among the firewood, and began to batter the door with it, but unsuccessfully. The noise was enough to

have wakened the dead, and I became thoroughly frightened, and Walter was pale, in spite of his exertions. In a minute Haj Omar came back with a large stone, which he had picked up from some tumbled down wall in the street, and Walter and he succeeded in breaking open the door, and getting into the kitchen. I saw Constantine lying on his mattress on the floor. He seemed to be dead; but Walter put his ear down to his chest to listen, and cried out, "He is alive—his heart beats a little—bring me some water." I rushed to the well, but the weight of snow was so great upon the lid that I could not raise it. I called Haj Omar, who was looking on, stupified with amazement. He began to clear off the snow. A sudden idea seized me: I filled my hands with as much snow as they could carry, and ran to Walter, who rubbed Constantine's face and forehead with it. But his eyes were closed heavily. "He looks dead, Walter."

"No, I think not; there is no sharpness in his features, but he is in a most frightful stupor."

Turning round, I saw a small pan on the ground near his head, containing the remains of a fire. "O Walter, it is charcoal! He has been stifled! What shall we do?"

"Charcoal? so it is. Then there is hope yet. I am *sure* he was alive just now. We must get him out of this."

Haj Omar brought the water, and Walter dashed some of it upon Constantine's breast, and then they both got him out of the kitchen on to the snow.

"He will be killed by the cold."

"No, no, anything for fresh air. Now, you dash more water on him every five minutes, and I'll run for Benson. There is hope still, indeed there is, Emily."

He returned incredibly soon with Mr Benson, who rushed into the kitchen, and searched among the embers until he found one or two live coals of charcoal, and with these he burnt the poor fellow's chest until a slight contraction of the muscles took place. "Thank God, we shall save him yet."

Haj Omar had been blowing at the embers, and now brought another bright coal. On being touched with this, there was a visible start and movement of the muscles. Then his chest heaved a little, and by degrees his breathing was restored, but it was fully an hour before he opened his eyes. He was still too languid to understand where he was, and it was not until Mr Benson had made him swallow some stimulant mixture, which he had brought with him, that he turned to us, and said, "The danger is past, but he has had a narrow escape. I was called three days ago to a Greek in similar circumstances, but he was dead. I could do nothing. You are shivering, Miss Russell. We must think of you too." He gave me some of the same mixture, for I was indeed shaking violently from fright and from cold, although the groom had put a cloak around me. When I stood in the snow beside poor Constantine, it was perishingly cold, and nothing but excitement could have made me disregard it. After

the application of the fire had restored breathing, Walter and Mr Benson and the groom had carried the patient into the dining-room.

As soon as Constantine opened his eyes, Haj Omar uttered a gruff "Hamdulillah," (God be praised,) and went away, but soon came back with hot coffee for us. The old man had made it, and arranged the cups neatly in a tray, and brought it entirely of his own thought. He then kindled a fire in the stove, muttering to himself all the time at Constantine's expense. The patient was able in another hour to walk across the court with the groom's help, but he staggered and was confused, and it was several days before he looked himself again.

"Let him be as much as possible in the fresh air, Miss Russell, that is what will do him most good. It is to be hoped he'll never shut himself up again with a charcoal fire in his room."

"I'll take care that he does not," said Walter, "if it's only to prevent my sister getting another such fright."

"Good-bye, Miss Russell, I must go to my other patients. We made the miller's wife very comfortable last night, Mr Nathaniel and I, thanks to the good friends who gave us the means."

It was wonderful that neither Walter nor I suffered that day from the fright, or from the cold, and I think we both escaped because we were obliged to exert ourselves and be our own servants; Constantine could do nothing at all. The groom went to market, drew

water, and made himself useful in many ways, but still there was plenty of work for me to do, and some in which I had to get Walter's help. Had the weather been fine I should have sent for Sarah, but Walter told me that he found the streets in a bad state with the snow, and we could not bring a poor creature with thin boots, and no better covering than cotton clothes and a white sheet through the cold.

The grand operation of cooking dinner was achieved, and we had eaten it and were sipping cups of coffee of Haj Omar's making, when heavy footsteps were heard in the court, and in came Abraham arrayed in a Russian fur-lined pelisse and immense Russian boots. "How are you, sir? and you, my dear lady? I saw the doctor just now, and he told me what has happened in your house, and I was frightened for you."

"We are all right, Abraham, and as for the servant, he is safe, thank God; but it might have been a very bad business."

"But you have no servant now, will you let me serve you?"

"Oh, thank you, we have managed beautifully for to-day, and by to-morrow Constantine will be able to do his own work."

"But indeed, ma'am, I can do many things if you will let me. Rachel wanted so much to come, but I would not let her because of the snow."

"You were very right. I thank you and her with all my heart, but our work is done, and it was not much after all. It was very good for us to have to be busy

after the fright, and now it 's all over. But come, sit down, we have not seen you for a long time, and I am longing to hear about Judah and his wife."

"Poor Judah is still in much trouble. He is better, and will be out of prison the day after to-morrow. But he has lost his wife."

"Lost his wife! what did she die of?"

"He has lost her and his child too; but they are not dead. Last night her friends put her and her child on a horse and sent them both away to Hebron."

"What! through the snow?"

"Through the snow. It must be that she was beginning to wish to see her husband, and so have they sent her off."

"Why, the child is only three weeks old! Surely the journey will kill them."

"I hope not. There was no wind last night, and the Russian Jews know how to wrap themselves up warm—but it is hard for them. By last post, a letter came from Beyrout to say that the Consul-General has decided that Judah must give the divorce to his wife, if he becomes a Christian and she wishes to be divorced. This is only a letter from Beyrout, and not from the Consul-General; and he cannot bear to divorce her until there is no more hope. But I am sure the decision of the Consul-General will come, and he will be obliged to sign the divorce."

"Then you think his wife began to wish to return to her husband?"

"Yes; and from fear of this, they have sent her away. And when Judah signs the divorce, it is all finished. He will see her no more."

"Poor fellow! What will he do when he gets out of prison?"

"I will take him to my house for a while, and he can eat with us and teach my boys Hebrew."

"And afterwards? He can't always live in that manner."

"God will provide. Perhaps Mr Andersen can find some work for him. There are no trades here in Jerusalem, even if he could work. It is very difficult for us Jews when we become Christians. Who will give us anything to do? You English are few, and cannot employ us. But God is great. He will give us bread, and I will teach Judah English—he must learn that, for some day it may help him to get a situation."

CHAPTER XLIV.

RIDE TO DAVID'S STRONGHOLD—MY FEVER—PURIM.

THE fright which I had suffered on account of Constantine's accident took more effect upon me than I had expected. I could not sleep as usual, and in a day or two a dull headache began to annoy me. Walter took alarm, and wished me to send for the

doctor. But I preferred trying the effect of fresh air,* and as the snow was almost all melted away by the bright sun, we went out for a ride. Everything appeared to have gained fresh life from the short winter; the birds sang more sweetly, the corn looked greener, and the flowers more brilliant. Iris, of velvety purple, and yellow star of Bethlehem set off each other's beauty; and here and there among the scarlet anemones was one so dazzlingly bright that the eye could not rest upon it.

In some fresh-ploughed fields on the Bethlehem plain we found the Pasha with a numerous train of effendis, of soldiers, and of negro slaves, amusing themselves with jereed practice. It was a beautiful spectacle: the finely accoutred horses, full of fire, yet obeying the lightest sign from the rider, twisting their muscles in every direction, stopping when at full speed, wheeling, dashing forwards, as if horse and rider were one, and animated with but one soul. The Pasha was by far the best performer, and his javelin rarely missed its mark. The sport consisted in so many men drawn up in a line facing a similar line. One rides up to the antagonist line, and shaking his jereed in the face of one there, challenges him by flinging it at him, then wheels and flies off. The provoked one starts forward to take vengeance, pursues, tries to get an aim, flings the jereed, but is baffled by his adversary wheeling sharply round, and the jereed falls to the ground.

* This was a great mistake. Headache should be dealt with at once by some simple remedy,—saline draught, or rhubarb, &c. Thus agues, &c. may be avoided.

The one who has thrown it picks it off the ground without checking the speed of his horse. Reaching to the ground as he flies past the spot, he catches it, and sways himself back into the saddle. One horse, I observed, used actually to bend a little on its knees, to make it easier for the rider to get the javelin. Scarcely is it picked up, when another rider coming behind him, flings his jereed full at his back. He wheels sharply round and pursues the new adversary. It was easy to see, however, that while many were fain to receive blows from the Pasha's jereed, none ventured to aim at him in return.

As the sun began to decline, I felt chilly, and we returned home. My head still ached; but I thought sleep would return after the fresh air, and that I should be better in the morning.

In the gateway we met Mr Richards. "I was just going to write you a note, Mr Russell. A party of us are going to the Cave of Adullam to-morrow; come with us. It is in a valley east of Bethlehem; a wild place, as you could well see, next Mar to Saba. Miss Russell, you ought to see the cavern; and there will be so many of us with candles that it will be well lighted up."

We went, leaving Jerusalem at about eight next morning. I had not slept well, and though my head ached but little, I was glad to ride quietly and breathe the pure morning air. About the middle of the Bethlehem plain we saw a group of men before us. There were some camels loose, some walking towards us, and some eating the young corn in one of the unfenced fields by the wayside. As we drew nearer, we could

distinguish that there was a scuffle going on among the men. It was in the very middle of our road. There were soldiers and kawasses of the Pasha, struggling and fighting with some peasantry, of gigantic stature and sufficiently evil countenance. But it was a horrid sight to see these huge, muscular men levelled to the ground by enormous bludgeons. The gentlemen gathered up all their Arabic to inquire the cause of such severity. "Thieves! thieves!" cried the soldiers. They looked like thieves; but nevertheless we cried, "Shame!" when, after their hands were tied with their own turbans pulled roughly off their heads, the soldiers struck them again as they lay helpless on the ground. One immense fellow of villainous expression had evidently given his captors much trouble. They were panting after the struggle. Not only was his turban gone, but his cap had been knocked off, and blood was flowing down his back.

The kawass-bashi, a cowardly-looking fellow, with sallow face and fine clothes, who had stood quietly looking on while his men did the real work, now came up behind this man, and raising a battle-axe, struck him as he lay there a heavy blow between the shoulders. The rest did not see it, but I did, and screamed just as he was aiming a second furious blow at the poor wretch's bare skull. Walter had before jumped off his horse, and was arguing, as well as he could, against needless cruelty. He turned round at my scream, just in time to seize the arm of the officer and stop the murderous blow. The coward scowled at my brother, but dared not strike him. One of our gentlemen who could not

speak Arabic had sat grinding his teeth till now, but seeing this he also jumped off his horse. Mr Richards had done so before, and the officer finding he was likely to get a rough handling from three enraged Englishmen, ordered his men to raise and drive off the prisoners to Jerusalem. We had occasion afterwards to remember the face of this officer, but it was one not easily forgotten. I was thoroughly shaken, and could not control a burst of something like hysterics, and one of our party was sick and ill from the disgusting spectacle. Gradually the air quieted me, and I rode on with Walter. The impression wore off; but I felt unwell, and could not eat at luncheon, which was spread on the ground in the shade of some rocks in the wild and wonderful valley we had come to visit. I had seen nothing before to compare with the savage scenery of this tremendous gorge. Rocks rent and shaken into fantastic forms. Here a sheer descent of hundreds of feet; there bare rugged cliffs piled one upon the other. The ledge upon which we were was about half-way from the bottom. Overhead rose inaccessible crags, and beneath yawned the abyss into which a false step or two must have dashed us. I lay upon Walter's coat with my eyes half closed, my head aching just enough to confuse my thoughts. The intense sunshine upon the opposite cliffs added to their desolate nakedness. There was no leaf, no blade, no friendly shadow to mitigate their frowning aspect. It was hot; the air quivered; the rocks seemed to glow.

Was this indeed the retreat to which the hatred of

Saul drove David?—these gloomy wilds, these hot parched recesses, the home which he was obliged to take in exchange for the sunny terraces and breezy heights of Bethlehem? Was this the stronghold into which he and his men fled? Was it Adullam, or was that yet farther south in Judah? Surely these look very like the "rocks of the wild goats;" and En-gedi is not far off, and this ravine does run down somewhere to the Dead Sea.*

I must have fallen into a slumber, and dreamed; for methought that we were a band of Christians fleeing from persecution in Jerusalem; and the scene of the morning on the plain came back to my imagination as a scuffle between our little company and the enemy who had pursued us; and the one whom we had seen struck down by the cruel officer bore Walter's features; but somehow we got away from them, and were here hiding ourselves; and Walter lay under the rock, faint and pining for a little water, and none dared to go and search for some; and I thought, "Is not the Well of Bethlehem near? Let me go and fetch him some water."

"Did you ask for some water, dear?" said Walter, bringing me a little in one of the travelling cups.

"I did not know that I asked. I believe I was asleep."

"You have slept for some time, but you should try and eat something before we go farther. It is time to move. One would not like to be belated in these terrible solitudes."

* 1 Sam. xxiii. 29; xxiv. 1, 2.

I could only eat a mouthful, but the water refreshed me, and I bathed my head and felt better. We had still to visit the cavern; so creeping along the ledge, stepping over chasms, crawling over rocks, we reached the mouth, and found ourselves within a vast assemblage of passages and caves. Here a narrow winding labyrinth; there a group of cells; and again, vast domed chambers like cathedrals, whose white walls reflected back the ruddy light of our candles, but whose floor echoed no footfall, by reason of the fine-powdered limestone perpetually dropping from the roof. None knew how far the chambers extended, but the whole mountain appeared to be one vast honeycomb, where hundreds might be easily sheltered and concealed. We fastened little bits of candle to the rock as we proceeded, to guide us back; but yet I felt uneasy. What if the candles should burn down and go out before we return? No such accident happened, and we got safely back to the entrance.

In going in we had missed observing what now caught Walter's eye—the names inscribed in pencil on the rock, "Irby and Mangles, 1818," and just below was "Seetzen, 1822."

But there was a vast interval from the time of David and Saul to our days, and no writing was there to tell who in all those centuries had stood in this narrow portal either as fugitive or as pursuer. Hebrew or Christian, Philistine or Idumean, Roman idolater, Persian fire-worshipper, Arab follower of Mohammed, or Bedawee, son of the desert,—none had left their

mark on the rock; and the shifting dust which they had trodden, as well as we, bore no trace of their footsteps.

The rocky crags around had echoed back many voices, in many various languages. Formerly of fugitives or pursuers, of pilgrims next; ours to-day, to-morrow perchance the words of mere travellers like ourselves, French or German, Italian or Russian, Greek or American. Whose in future, when the next wave of change or of war shall have rolled over the land!

We mounted and left the spot. My horse picked his way safely enough along the narrow path. I had only to let him follow my brother's horse, and sit still upon the saddle. The rest were talking, but I scarcely heard them, my own thoughts were so busy that they seemed to shut out everything else.

"You seem unwell, Emily," at length said Walter, turning round when the worst part of the road was past. "You look flushed, and ill."

"My head aches, but not very much. I am not very well; but if you go on steadily I can follow, only don't canter or trot."

We went on and on. In due time we got into the road which I knew, but my mind seemed incapable of noticing anything but the variety and multitude of its own thoughts.

At the gate of Jerusalem our friends parted from us. I remember saying good night, and remember getting to our own door; and Walter's taking me down from

my horse, and leading me up to my room; and that I went to bed, and that he brought me some most delicious tea; and that soon after Dr Baron came and ordered me to take some medicine, after which my headache returned with tenfold violence, and I tossed about all night, and could not sleep. Oh, how long that night seemed! But early, before day had fully dawned, there was Walter again bringing me some more tea—so refreshing. All my bones ached as well as my head, and I guessed that this was an attack of fever. By and by Helaneh came and sat by my bedside, and then Sarah came and looked sympathisingly at me. This lasted for nearly a week. The severe aching of the bones was the worst;* but at last it ceased, and I fell into a delightful sleep. When I awoke, Rachel was sitting by my side. She had been crying. The foolish child had been frightened about me; but her smile of joy when I began to speak was worth seeing. The fever really was gone, and nothing remained but weakness. But it seems that I had been in some danger in the night, and now a crisis had taken place for the better. She would not let me talk, but went out of the room, and Walter came to see me. His very quiet way of speaking showed me that he too had been alarmed, but he agreed with me that a decided change had taken place, and I was really better.

"And now, Emily, you have only to take some of the many good things that Mrs Andersen and Mrs Douglas are waiting the doctor's permission to send

* This is most common in Syrian fever, and very trying. Is it alluded to in Ps. xxxviii. 3?

you. Miss Andersen has just left the house, and will be here again by and by."

Rachel came back, bringing me some refreshment, and presently the doctor arrived and pronounced all fever gone, and he told me that good nurses and cooks must now complete the cure: but he forbade my talking much during the next three days for fear of a relapse.

Mary Andersen came in the evening, and I found that she and my other kind friends had been sitting up and nursing me during the last seven days and nights. Walter would otherwise have been ill also; but Dr Baron told them of my illness, and the kind people immediately came to my brother's relief, for Helaneh's strength had given way after one night of watching, and she had got ague.

Sarah would not leave the house, and scarcely my bedside. Poor thing! nothing could exceed her kindness and the good-will with which she rendered me every little service in her power.

In about a week I had recovered sufficiently to be led down-stairs, and put upon the sofa. I was very glad for Walter's sake; now he would be able to resume his painting, which my illness had interrupted.

The weather was bright and fresh, and oh, how pleasant it was to look out of the window and watch the pigeons flying over the temple ground; now alighting on the gilt crescent at the top of the dome, now circling around the cypress-trees!

Helaneh and Constantine came to kiss my hands, with the words, "El Hamdulillah! God be praised that you are in peace; the evil is past, God be

praised;" and presently Haj Omar did the same. Mary brought me a bunch of cyclamen and anemones, yellow ranunculus and irises. Sarah had already given me some early pinks and stocks, which she offered with the exclamation, "Bendicho el Dio!" She told me that she and her son Gershon had several times gone to the temple wall to pray for me while I was ill, and this touching mark of affection had been shown me by others of my Jewish friends.

This being the day of Purim, or the feast of Esther and Mordecai, they also brought me several presents of cakes and sweetmeats, and of sweet wine; for on this festival it is a duty to send portions to their friends. (See Esther ix. 19–22.)

Walter went with Dr Baron to visit a Jewish family of his acquaintance. On returning, he poured into my lap a collection of sweetmeats and sugar-plums which had been given him.

"This Purim keeping has been a very curious affair, Emily. I wish you could have seen it. All the shops in the Jewish quarter were closed, except those for sale of sweetmeats, and all the Ashkenaz little boys had rattles and hammers in their hands. Dr Baron told me that with them they beat the benches and seats in the synagogue, making belief that they are beating Haman, and the uproar is terrific. It seems many of them hold it a duty to carry their rejoicings so far, and to drink so much wine, that they shall be unable to distinguish between 'Blessed be Mordecai,' and 'Cursed be Haman.'"

"We have had a most absurd illustration of this in our school," said Mary. "Little Solomon, the son of the Algerine Jew, is beginning to speak English very tolerably, but slowly, syllable after syllable. Yesterday Miss Wilson was dismissing the children when Solomon came up. 'You will come early to school to-morrow, Solomon,' said she. 'No, ma'am.' 'Why not?' 'I can't come to school to-morrow, ma'am.' 'Why not, Solomon?' 'Because, ma'am,' (with a very serious face,) 'to-morrow we all get drunk.' Poor Miss Wilson did not know how to keep her face straight; but she just managed to say, 'Get drunk! what does the boy mean?' 'Ma'am, it is the feast of Esther—we *must* get drunk.' 'I beg you will not do any such thing, Solomon; it is very wicked to be drunk; but come to your lessons in good time—do you hear?' 'Yes, ma'am, I will ask my father; but it is the feast. I don't know if I will come.'"

When the burst of laughter which this tale provoked had subsided, Walter told us that the Jewish quarter was not in such a disorderly state as one might have expected.

"I suppose the merriest were kept at home; but we met a party in masks and dominoes; and very odd it looked to see the Jewish carnival in Jerusalem.

"The family we visited were all attired in holiday splendour. One or two of the young women had on antique dresses of gold and silver brocade, which probably were heirlooms in the family; and gold embroidered jackets, less ancient-looking. After the cakes

and wine, four of the young ladies sat on the ground tucking up their heels with admirable facility. One had a double drum before her; another a tambourine; the third sang, and the rest replied in chorus, clapping their hands, which clapping was continued between the stanzas as a symphony. The songs were alternately in Spanish and Arabic. Then the daughter of the house performed an Oriental dance—a very grave *pas seul*, with solemn face, writhing and swaying the hips and ankles. But the movements of the arms and hands were elegant enough.

"Her dress was splendid, Emily. I wish you could have seen it: a bright blue jacket, and the rest all embroidered with gold; she wore jewelled rings, bracelets, small pearl festoons, and chains of gold, antique enough for the age of the Arabian Nights. Her head and shoulders were covered with a mail of gold coins well burnished for the occasion. Her fingers were henna'd and her eyes kohh'led. Her companions on the ground led off by a stanza of singing, and then accompanied her with the drum and clapping of hands, in rhythm and most accurate time. The dance tired her very much, and I was glad to see her sit down, after making a salaam to us and to her parents. Then there followed plenty of music—the airs simple and of curious Oriental character, with a prolonged wailing kind of note at the end of each line of the song. What a clan of the family there was—old and young of three generations; the nurse and other servants outside round the open door joining in the clapping! One of them having

occasion to call away the eldest son, called him 'Señor Bechor,' (Señor First-born.)* The men's dresses were mostly of blue and purple colour, with fur trimmings; and the ladies wore simple natural flowers in their head among the gold chains and precious stones.

"I met Richards as I was coming back, and he wants me to go out gazelle hunting with them to-morrow, but I said no, for my painting has been too much at a stand-still lately."

"Oh, do go, the fresh air will be so good for you. Rachel will come, I dare say, and spend the day with me."

"I'll send her to you," said Mary Andersen.

CHAPTER XLV.

STIFF-NECKED JEWS—MOSLEM FUNERAL—GAZELLE SHOOTING.

THE next was one of those fresh bracing March mornings, which put fresh life into everything, and fortify one against the coming spring heat. Light clouds, that seemed inclined to be showers as the sun was not quite hot to turn them into dew, skimmed over Jerusalem. Sparrows were twittering in every direction, and one or two, more audacious than the rest, flew in and out of a little star-shaped hole which the fancy of the Moslem builder had made over my window, perhaps to

* As a title—not as his proper name.

admit the first ruddy rays of the rising sun. They flew in and out, and stole before my very eyes some cotton from my dressing-table for their nest-building mates. Walter had gone, after tapping at my door and satisfying himself that I was safe and well. I listened to his horse's hoofs passing down the street, and half wished I were strong enough to have been with him. In due time Rachel appeared, rosy from her walk. How fast she had grown into the woman! and yet how sweet and simple her manners remained; how unconscious of the beauty, which her plain cotton sun-bonnet only enhanced! I had never seen her looking half so well or half so pretty.

"How are your brothers and your father?"

"They are well. My father brought me here, and will come for me at sunset."

"And Judah?"

"He is well also. Yesterday he received a message that his wife and little son are gone to Russia. They went from Hebron to Jaffa, and from there by a ship; and so they are gone. He was obliged to sign the divorce. The Consul of Beyrout said that it was a Jewish marriage, and therefore he must do as the Jews wish. He is now with us, and is going to try and learn to be a watchmaker. Moses the watchmaker is willing to teach him."

"I thought Moses the watchmaker was a Jew."

"He is a Jew, but he has a cousin who is a Christian. He is a friend of my father. The mission will give Judah food and clothes while he is learning."

We passed a happy day. I was enjoying the luxury of rest, together with the sense of returning health. Rachel was glad to be with me. She had been reading to me, and then began to ask me questions. Her great curiosity was to know all I could tell her about England. She gathered courage as she went on, and at last began, "What a happy country England must be, Miss Russell! The people must be very good there. I so often wish that I was a born Christian like you, that I might be better."

"That does not make much difference, my dear. Born Christians are quite as liable to do wrong as you are."

"Oh, that cannot be; born Christians are taught when they are so young. Now, if I had been taught not to be angry when I was a little child, it would be so much easier; but now it is very hard for me. I get angry sometimes before I know it. And there are so many things that are easier for born Christians. Then we Jews are not loved by all the Christians; we are like strangers among them."

"You are not a stranger to Miss Andersen, nor to me, nor to"——

"No; if everybody was like her and you. I was in a house yesterday where something made me very angry. I was working, and that person came to look at my work, and began to talk, and told me I ought to be very humble, because all the Jews have such hard hearts, and are too proud. And that person said it was only by the charity of Christians that we have

been taught religion. It is true that the kindness of some Christians made us hear about Christianity; but I got angry, and said that Adam was the father of the Christians, as well as of us, and that amongst us Jews, when we do a person a kindness it is a shame to tell him of it. And then I said,—but please don't be angry with me; only I must tell you all the truth, that I have seen proud Christians also whose hearts are hard."

"O Rachel! there was no need for saying so."

"No, I know. But I said worse. That person then said that God calls the Jews stiff-necked, and so they must be so; and that it does me good to be told this, that I may be humble and not think myself like other people; and I got so angry that I said, 'God does not call us the only stiff-necked people. You Goyim would have been still worshipping stones and idols if some of our stiff-necked fathers had not gone among you and suffered everything in order to teach you Christianity;' and I went out of that house, and I don't want to go there again."

"What were you doing there?"

The tears had gathered, and she could hardly answer me. "Sewing. My little brother David wants a summer coat, and I thought if I work a little I can earn enough to buy it for him; but I won't go again."

"But, Rachel, even though others be unkind, you should not do what you know to be wrong. I think you should go again, at least to say you are sorry for getting angry."

"I am sorry for getting angry; but why should that person make me angry? What business has she to speak so of my nation?"

"That was not very kind, but she thought it good for you; and then, you know, we must try and do right, no matter who does wrong. After all, she meant it for your good, when she said you ought to be humble. Come, promise me that you will go and say that you are sorry for getting angry."

"I cannot; she despises my people; she has no business to do so."

"Can you do your nation any good by doing wrong? Rather show that a little Christian Jewess can do right when she has found out what right is, though it is difficult. Don't refuse me this, dear Rachel; you know it is right."

"It will be very hard, Miss Russell. I would do anything for your sake; but how can I go into that house again?"

"Because you feel you ought; and you should have courage for that; and then I do beg you will. I shall not be easy till it is done."

"I know I was too angry. I will go; but I wish everybody was kind;" and tears would hardly be kept back as the poor girl said this.

"I also wish that everybody would be kind."

There was silence for a little while, then Rachel began again, "You always show me my fault, and then it is much easier to do right. That lady is right too when she says the Jews are often proud. But she is

like a bad doctor, who gives medicine so roughly that people are choked by it. She made me angry, and more proud also. I never feel proud when I am with Mrs Andersen, or Miss Andersen, or you, or Mrs Wells; but whenever I hear people say something about *those Jews*, it always makes me think bad thoughts. Its just the same as the old rabbi that used to come to my father's house long ago. He fasted three days of every week, and read very much; but he always used to say, 'those Gentiles,' and tell us children that the Goyim have bad hearts, not like the hearts which God gave the Jews; and that therefore the Jews love the Torah, and the Gentiles won't hear it."

"But do you still believe this, Rachel?"

"Oh no. I know it says in the Bible that there is no difference between the Jew or the Greek, for all have sinned. Mr Andersen taught me that; and I am not half good yet. Oh, I wish I was a born Christian like you!"

Walter's return interrupted our conversation.

"We have had a capital day, Emily, and by and by you shall have some gazelle venison for to-morrow's dinner, and a skin to make a mat for your feet, as a trophy of my first day's sport. The first thing that we saw this morning on passing the Jaffa Gate was a Moslem funeral, and a strange sight it was. There were crimson and green silk banners, inscribed with Koran verses, borne aloft before the procession. Then a big kettle-drum being beaten; then men and boys waving palm branches, just before the bier, which was

carried on men's shoulders, and jolted up and down in a wonderful fashion. It seems to be a merit to help to bear a dead man to the grave. There was an immense crowd of white-turbaned people, in all coloured raiment, chanting the Moslem profession of faith, and all jostling each other in their attempts to relieve and change the bearers without stopping the bier. Benson says he has seen some people run out from their shops when a funeral passed in order to carry the body a little way. They were going at a great rate, and I expected every moment they would let the body fall. It was like a triumphal procession."

"Was there no coffin?"

"No. Ibrahim Bey, who was with us, told us that they think it wrong to bury people in boxes, for God has commanded the dust to return to its dust. They carry the body on a bier covered with coloured shawls and spangled silk clothes, and at the head a brilliant turban; but we were told that all this is taken off at the grave. I asked why they went so fast. Ibrahim Bey said, to get him out of his trouble as fast as possible, for the dead man knows what is going on; and as soon as he is put into the grave the two angels, Nâkir and Munkir, come and ask him to what faith he belongs, then bid him repeat his confession, and put various questions to him about his religion and his life. If he answers right, the angels draw his soul out of his mouth, as sweetly as possible: but if not, then the angels belabour him with clubs until they have

driven the soul out of every part of his body, and broken all his bones.

"I also asked him why the Moslem women put flowers on the graves of their relations, and go out every Thursday to visit the tombs. He said that the souls hover over the graves on that day, and the women go to talk with them, and tell them what is passing in the family.

"Just then a gazelle bounded across our path, and put everything else out of my head. I fired, and missed; but Richards was more fortunate, and knocked it over. After this we separated. Our Oriental friend went round the hills to frighten the game towards us. Presently two gazelles came. Benson fired and missed, and away they sprang. The dogs"——

"What dogs had you?"

"Two gazelle hounds of Richard's, one of Benson's, and a pointer of Ibrahim's, besides my dog. They were very impatient, but the ground was too bad and broken, so we did not let them go.

"On we went. Between El Jib and Er Ram we saw six gazelles at once: but they flew over the hills, and we had no chance of a shot. We let the dogs go, but called them back almost immediately, for they would have been tired to no purpose. Presently a wolf crossed our road, and the dogs followed. It was a most gallant spectacle to see them pursue the villain down the glen, and several times turn him over; but at last he escaped. Our riding was hard work down the break-neck rocky descents. At last the dogs re-

turned; two of them bleeding from the bites of the wolf, the other from cuts down the leg from the sharp stones.

"We rested them a while before going on. Presently a hare started close to us. Then near the old ruins called Adâsa, (by the by, a Maccabean site,) we saw three more gazelles feeding below. Two of us crawled down the hill until we got within shot. Once I saw one of the gazelles raise its head as if to listen; but in another moment my bullet hit it, and it fell. The others fled. They let the dogs slip, and a long chase ensued; but I stayed to carry away my game, and lost sight of the party. I put the little thing over my shoulder, and made my way down the ravine in the direction they had taken. Presently I heard partridges, and looking round saw them running among the rocks. I had fortunately some small shot, so I thought I might as well try them, and managed to hit two while Rover stood sniffing at the dead gazelle. He was quite a picture, Emily, and I shall make a sketch of him from memory, in that wild place on the mountain-side.

"At last I discovered my friends standing by a stream dismounted, and the hounds stretched out and panting. The gazelle had escaped from the hounds. The opinion was unanimous that it would have had no chance on level ground, or even in this instance, if the dogs had not been previously fatigued with hunting the wolf.

"Some peasants came to look at us while we were at luncheon, and there being water near us,* one of them

* For the necessary washing.

commenced his prayers. We saw some more partridges on our way home, and Benson got a good shot. Ah, here comes the gazelle."

Constantine brought it in. Poor little thing! one little dark spot in the delicate white fur of its side showed where the fatal bullet had taken effect.

It had so happened that until now Walter had had no opportunity of making Rachel's acquaintance. Even now her usual shyness prevented her from saying much in the presence of "Mr Walter," whom she looked up to with a kind of awe, as a personification of the learning and wisdom which she simply thought English "born Christians" were sure to possess. However, the mixture of *naïvete* with originality and good sense in her manner of talking delighted him. My brother did his best to amuse her, by showing her books and prints. The latter opened a new world before her. Those of places and things in England appeared to interest her most. One of St Paul's Cathedral led to some remarks about London.

"Is London larger than Jerusalem, Miss Russell?" (Her remarks were always addressed to me.)

"Yes. In size more than ten times; but in population more than one hundred times."

"Oh, in one city! No wonder they have made their church so large."

"But there are hundreds of churches in London."

"Oh, I wish I could see London; it must be like heaven!"

"No, Rachel. There are many who are not good,

and the good people are so busy that they have not often time to talk to each other."

"Still it must be better than any other place in the world. What schools there must be! Oh, if my brothers could go there to be taught, they would come back more learned than the most learned rabbis."

"Perhaps they would not wish to come back after seeing England."

"They will not forget Jerusalem," said she firmly. "No Jew can forget Jerusalem."

"Talking of rabbis, Emily," observed Walter. "I saw two most interesting people at Hebrew service this morning, not exactly rabbis, but almost as remarkable people. Two Nestorians, real mountain Nestorians, a priest and deacon, who have been driven out by the last invasion of Bedr Khan Bey. They are in great poverty and ragged peasant clothes; but handsome ruddy men. It seems they are lodging in Mr Andersen's house."

"That is interesting. How strange if Grant's idea is right, and they really are members of the ten tribes, come to Jerusalem as Christians, lodged in the house of a Jewish missionary, and attending Hebrew service on Mount Zion!"

"Strange indeed! I shall read Grant's book again with different interest after having seen these men. O Emily, what a missionary centre this church of ours may become to all the nations round! Really the Greeks are not so much mistaken when they show that stone in the Church of the Resurrection as the

middle of the world. This *is* the middle of the world to Europe, Asia, and Africa."

"Was not that the reason why God put the temple here? and why He gave this land to our nation, Miss Russell?"

The entrance of Mary Andersen prevented my replying. I don't quite know what answer I should have made, but the questions have since caused me much musing. Certain it is that even now, in her extreme degradation, influences from the Holy City radiate to the farthest limits of the habitable earth. Yes, truth and life in Jerusalem are truth and life at the heart. Error in Jerusalem has produced, is producing, consequences as dire all over the world, as might mortal disease in the heart and spring of all vitality in the human body. Does not the present condition of the Jewish nation in other lands attest this? Are not the churches of Asia and of Africa witnesses that the fountain-head at Jerusalem has lost its purity—that the pulse of life is become feeble and low, nay, scarcely perceptible? How, then, shall distant nations retain their vitality?

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE PILGRIMS—UNCLEAN MEATS.

NEXT day Walter took me out for my first walk, or rather ride, since my illness. I had Mrs. Andersen's

donkey, and he walked by my side. Going out by St Stephen's Gate, and keeping close to the city wall, we enjoyed the perfect quiet of the scene. Excepting the occasional cawing of a rook, nothing broke the stillness, and the pure air was refreshing to me as a draught of spring-water. I told Walter the subject of my meditations.

"My own thoughts have been occupied rather differently, Emily. Your Rachel's remarks and questions —so childishly simple, yet perpetually taking for granted the pre-eminent dignity of her nation—have something very singular about them. Were there the slightest tinge of presumption about herself, they would make me angry; but she is as innocent as a child, and instead of offending, she sets one thinking."

"She inherits that simplicity from her father."

"It is very charming. But she is too shy; if it were not for you I should never hear her speak, except, indeed, in praise of her little David. I wonder if the boy is as clever as she thinks him."

"Perhaps not; she knows no others; but he is very bright-looking, and learns fast enough; but I think his brother as clever, though he is more quiet."

"Supposing I take them in hand a little bit. Some Latin grammar may prepare them for going to England to be as learned as rabbis. I will make a little time. Their sister really deserves help in teaching them."

We returned by the Zion Gate, and Walter took me into the garden of the Armenian Convent. Oh, what a

wondrous scene did the inner courts of the convent present! Easter being near at hand, hundreds and thousands of pilgrims had already arrived. There were Koords and Persians, and Armenians and Georgians, and Copts and Abyssinians, and some from Constantinople and from Asia Minor, and others from Bokhara, Cabool, and the farthest parts of India. Men and women and children; robust people with rosy complexions, in various costumes of sheepskins in the form of cloaks and jackets, and caps of Astrachan lamb's wool, dyed and naturally curled.

What a running in and out, as from so many ant-holes! What a chaffering and bargaining in the great square of the convent! Eatables, and clothing, and re'ics of Jerusalem; crosses and bracelets, and rosaries from Hebron and Bethlehem! What a Babel of tongues! What a curious display of viands, fit for the Lenten fast!—small earthen pans of pickled olives and cauliflower; dried fish, parched peas, and small figs of Bethlehem; and cakes of Arab bread; and musk-scented soap, stamped with an image of the Holy Sepulchre; immense radishes from Siloam; little earthen oil lamps; cotton printed handkerchiefs from Manchester, and wax tapers and incense, and, *alas!* huge jars of raki.

Here was a bookstall, where were sold devotional books in the crabbed Armenian character, not only printed but bound in the convent. There was a butcher's stall, empty now, but where, on Easter eve, the immense multitude would obtain meat for the breaking

of the fast. Here stood a knot of Constantinople women, in rich coloured merinoes and furs, their features scarcely concealed by folds of snowy muslin, and gossipping in mellifluous Turkish. There a group of rough Bulgarians in sheepskins, whose dialect sounded as uncouth as they themselves looked.

But all bowed with reverence before the black robed monk, who conducted us through the din and turmoil up-stairs, and across spacious terraces. The monk told us that three thousand pilgrims had already arrived, and more were daily pouring in. In one place we passed a little room, where a painter was busy multiplying gaudy pictures of the saints, the Virgin Mary, St George and the Dragon, &c., &c., for the poor pilgrims to carry away to their distant homes.

We arrived in the garden. How refreshing the stillness under the great old pine-trees; the peaceful, the vast stretch of country towards the Dead Sea and the Moab mountains! How strange the murmur of voices that rose from the crowded precincts below, and mingled with the sighing among the branches!

"Yes, Emily, you are right. This is indeed the heart of the world. Who shall say what would be the result if all these devotees could carry away to their distant homes such truths as St Peter once preached to the multitudes out of every nation under heaven on the day of Pentecost?"

"If I could, Walter, I would attach a force of learned, zealous chaplains to our bishop's staff. They should each have a distinct class as their special care,

each should be a good theologian, and each should speak one or more of these many tongues. One should know Armenian, another Turkish, a third Greek, a fourth Abyssinian or Coptic, and so on."

"That reminds me, I saw a troop of Abyssinian and Coptic pilgrims arrive this morning. They had come through the desert on camels, and were singing for joy as they entered the city, or rather were chanting some kind of psalms in time to the swaying of their hammocks or cages as the camels strode along. Most primitive they looked, with their indigo garments and copper complexions. And as for Greeks, the streets past the holy sepulchre and round their convents are almost impassable. I never saw anything so wonderful as the assemblage of pilgrims this year. Mule bells were jingling, and fresh parties arriving, and there were shouts of welcome at the convent doors, and firing of guns from the pilgrims themselves, and old men weeping for joy, and mothers kissing their children, and grandmothers cooped up in panniers, balanced on the other side of the same mule by a whole family of grandchildren. I never saw anything like it in my life."

Walter had only given me a faint idea of the scenes in the streets of Jerusalem. I found them far more wonderful as we endeavoured to pass down the town to our house. The Franciscans, the Aboonas, the Papas jostling with well-dressed Christians, the swaggering Maltese, the Russian soldier with his medal, the filthy Russian boor, the Oriental natives; besides the occa-

sional Sister of Charity, with gilt crucifix from her girdle, and brass or pewter medals on her breast; now and then, but rarely, a scallop-shelled pilgrim, staff in hand. What will Jerusalem be by the time that Easter arrives, and where can these multitudes be lodged?

When we got home we found Rachel and her father. Walter delighted them by his offer to teach the boys. Abraham went to fetch them at once, and Rachel and I were left alone. She was silent a while, and seemed to be dwelling upon her brother's good fortune; but presently some graver subject took possession of her thoughts.

"Come, dear, you have been sighing several times over your work. You cannot be thinking of anything pleasant."

"I was thinking, first, of the kindness of Mr Walter, and then of your great kindness; and then of that person who spoke so hardly to me when I went to work there. I did not like to go and say I was sorry, but I have thought a great deal about it since. I will go, but oh, if you could do one thing for me!"

"What is it?"

"Would you go to her first and make her understand. I am afraid I may say too much, and then it will be worse."

"I have no objection. It was Mrs Smith?"

"Yes; if she does not understand my meaning, perhaps there will be more trouble, and one thing more I want to ask, if there is anything my brothers could do for Mr Walter in return for his great kindness?"

"Thank you, dear; at present I know of nothing except for your brothers to learn as fast as they can; and I will call on Mrs Smith for you."

"That they will. I never have to tell them. David sometimes gets up at two o'clock in the morning for his work, and I have to send him to bed again."

Abraham came to fetch his daughter, and brought the two little boys, all eagerness to begin their new lesson, but a little bit afraid of the great Mr Walter.

He led the little boys to the table and began the lesson, only waiting to shake hands with Rachel and Abraham, saying, "We shall do wonders, I hope, and must begin at once. I will send Constantine home with them in an hour."

It was a good opportunity for me to go and talk with Mrs Smith about Rachel, so I put on my bonnet. On coming down from my room I found waiting in the court one of my Jewish friends. She had brought home some work, and also held in her hand a parcel carefully folded up in a clean cloth. It contained large round cakes, thin as wafers, crisp, and made of beautifully white flour. Passover was at hand, and these were some of the unleavened bread which all Jews eat during seven days. I called Helaneh to bring a plate. She came, but on seeing what they were, refused to touch them—"Nejess! nejess!" (unclean, unclean.)

The poor Jewess looked much hurt. "I would not bring the lady an unclean thing; they are our bread for the feast;" and she broke off a bit and put it into her mouth, as if to show that it was indeed clean.

"For shame, Helaneh! they are white as snow; take them immediately."

"I touch them? God forbid!" (and she crossed herself;) "why, there is blood in them, Christian blood. Those cursed Jews (far be they from thee) kill Christian children, that they may have the blood for their cakes."

"Helaneh! I shall be very angry if you say such a thing again. It is not true. Blood is accursed to the Jews; they will not touch it, much less eat it."

The poor Jewess seized and kissed both my hands at this unexpected defence. "What shall I say, Señora? These Arabs will not believe us, and we are always afraid it should happen to us here in Jerusalem as to our brethren in Damascus and in Rhodes."

Helaneh caught the words. "Yes, O lady, if thou wilt not believe that they use blood, why were so many of them killed in Damascus and in Rhodes? And the Consuls believed it, and had them punished. May God cut short their days!"

"Helaneh, be silent! It is very wicked to curse people. I tell you that I know that the Jews would not taste blood if you were to cut off their head to make them do it. Now take those cakes and put them away for me."

"God forbid! I won't touch them."

Constantine here came forward and said, "It won't hurt you to touch them, Helaneh; you need not eat them;" on hearing which she actually spat on the ground, and ran into the kitchen, exclaiming, "May thy

father be burnt, and the father of the Ingleez! They're half Jews; they won't pray to the blessed Virgin; and they touch passover cakes."

Constantine, perhaps unintentionally, received the unfortunate cakes upon the tray in such a manner as *not* to touch them himself, and carried them into the dining-room, I suppose to spare Helaneh another sight of the obnoxious things; and the poor Jewess was glad to escape for fear of hearing worse at the expense of her religion. She evidently was frightened at what Helaneh had said, but I tried to make her understand that there was nothing to fear.

Oddly enough, Helaneh received something like a retort upon the uncleanness of her own food in Jewish eyes the very same day from Sarah, who, however, had not been in the house when the affair of the cakes had happened, and knew nothing about it.

Being Lent, and of course fasting-time for the Christians, Helaneh and Constantine could not eat our food, so I used to allow them to bring from the market such things as they could eat. I was in the kitchen giving my dinner orders, and Sarah was standing by. Constantine took the various articles he had brought from the bazaar out of his basket and gave them to Helaneh. Her hands were pretty full. She wanted to lift up the joint of meat, and without turning to look at her, put a small bowl into Sarah's hands to hold for her, or rather was going to do so; for Sarah, on seeing that the bowl contained snails, retreated with an exclamation of disgust, and down went all the snails on the

ground. "They're not nejess," (unclean,) cried Helaneh, angrily; "it's you Jews that are nejess."

"Hush, hush, Helaneh! The law of Moses, (Neby Moosa,) you know, says that snails are nejess for the Jews; and if you call people nejess in my house, I must punish you."

To put an end to the matter, I took Sarah and gave her some work to do in my room at the top of the house.

Mrs Smith and I were not much acquainted. However, she was pleased at my calling upon her, and said she was glad to find my fever had been no worse, &c., &c. Presently I mentioned the object of my visit—namely, to explain that Rachel was sensible she had been too hasty, and wished to come and say she was sorry.

"She ought to be sorry. She is a great deal too proud, and that spirit of hers must be broken."

"She is sometimes quick, but is always sorry afterwards; and, indeed, I don't think she is particularly proud. I know she wishes to be humble in her thoughts and ways."

"All the Jews are proud, and when they become Christians they ought to be made to feel a little. It is for their good."

"But supposing they were proud, will irritating their feelings and wounding them lead them to be otherwise? I should fear their shrinking into themselves under such discipline, and becoming worse rather than better."

"You will excuse me, Miss Russell. I have long wished for an opportunity of speaking to you, but feared you would be offended. But I think you are helping to put that Rachel into a very false position."

"How so?"

"You have been teaching her to read and write English, and you allow her to speak to you as an equal. Now, we all know that she and her father are paupers, and must remain so. They ought to be treated according to their station in life. And there is Mrs Wells teaching the girl music; it is preposterous."

"Really, Mrs Smith, I don't think it is fair to call them paupers. Poor Abraham, it is true, lost all by becoming a Christian, but he is earning his bread; and as to his station in life, I don't quite know what that is. He was of a family as good and as old perhaps as yours or mine; and we ought as Christians to expect that, because he has made great worldly sacrifices for the sake of Christianity, he will be in God's good time restored to something like the position and comfort he has given up."

"I don't think so. If that girl is sincere, she ought now to be a servant in one of the English families, earning her bread."

"But if her father does not wish her to be a servant, and associate with Arabs and all sorts of people? Indeed, if you knew how necessary she is in her own home you would hardly desire her to leave it. She does all the work of the house, and cooks, and washes, and cares for her little brothers, and teaches them also."

"Well, all I can say is, that the pride of those Jews ought to be broken. It is the first thing that the mission ought to do with them when they want to be Christians."

I was on the point of saying that I was afraid her way of doing it would rather drive Christianity out of their heads; but reflected that it was useless to argue on such matters, and that after all my errand was to pave the way for Rachel's apology. It now occurred to me that it would be better for me to make it at once for her, than to run the risk of a fresh collision if the poor girl should unluckily say either too little or too much, therefore I added: "Rachel has been laid up for the last few days by an accident to her foot, or she would have come herself to say she was sorry for an unbecoming speech the other day. I have undertaken to make an apology for her, and trust you will think no more about it." So saying I rose to take my leave.

Mrs Smith replied, "Oh, very well; but she had better not come again to work. I have given the sewing to another person. Half a day's wages is due to her; she shall have it when she chooses to fetch it."

"I 'll take it to her, if you please."

"No, no: let her come for it. Why, my dear Miss Russell, you seem to have no idea how to train up these converts. Never let them have a will of their own. Humble them and keep them under, if you wish them to become real Christians. You know they have never had our advantages in their youth, and we cannot expect them to be like us."

These words rang in my ears all the way home—"expect them to be like us." What are the poor people to become if they have no higher aim than to become "like us?" And yet it is in the nature of things that they should look upon us as examples, and measure Christianity by our illustration of it in daily conduct. There is Rachel talks of wishing she were "a born Christian." Alas! born Christians are but poor examples; and the only thing we must try and do is to lead her and such as she to look higher, even to our Great Example, and strive to follow in His footsteps, however perplexing may be the sayings and doings of "born Christians."

At dinner I related to Walter the history of my visit to Mrs Smith. He had scarcely patience to hear me to the end. "How very unfeeling! How dare any one say what is the station in life of another? Would Mrs Smith like to be told that her own son must never be allowed to rise beyond his present station? There would be an end of all improvement, all enterprise in this world, if the doctrine were true, that where each man or woman is at this present moment there they must stay. Who would be industrious? who would cultivate talent? or who would teach their children? It is well she does not know I have begun to teach the boys Latin; she would think it her duty to come and protest—all for their good, of course. Let us reverse the picture, and imagine Abraham going to protest against Mrs Smith's son learning French!"

CHAPTER XLVII.

SPRING FLOWERS—PASSOVER LAMBS—FORMER AND LATTER RAIN.

OUR horses were out at grass, for it is the custom in Jerusalem to sow a patch of barley upon some waste place within the city, and to turn the horses into it during three or four weeks of the spring. The barley is sown for this purpose in November or December, and is fit for use in March. Haj Omar gave us no rest until we had hired a patch for our horses in the south-east corner of the city, near the broken bridge between Moriah and Zion. He established a tent in one corner for himself, and tethered the animals where the barley was longest.

They seemed to enjoy it immensely, and rapidly cleared a space round them; but the affectionate creatures were never too busy to raise their heads and give us a neigh of welcome when we used to go and visit them.

Being thus dismounted—for the groom would not let us ride while the horses were on grass diet—walks were our only resource. But the weather was most enjoyable. Fresh, and sometimes even cold winds, tempered the increasing heat of the sun. An occasional sirocco brought an oppressive day; but we did not mind that, for it always brought out fresh flowers. I was now very busy collecting and drying them. The bulbous plants had almost done flowering. There were

only iris and white star of Bethlehem left. The scarlet anemone was beginning to give place to the ranunculus, also scarlet. But a host of fresh flowers had appeared. Night-blowing stock, and pheasant's eye, and marigolds, and dandelions, and blue borage; mallows and vetches, scarlet, yellow, and purple; ragged robin, fumitory, and campion; wild mignionette and trailing briony; half a dozen kinds of clover; yellow ranunculus and yellow stock, and several varieties of cranesbill. One of the latter was very beautiful—large, and of exquisite blue —but so fragile, that we could only secure it early in the morning. It dropped off when the sun rose high. Towards the end of the month scarlet poppies began to come out, and here and there early buds of the rich crimson everlasting, salvias, yellow flax, corn flowers; gladioles and hollyhocks came in April and May. Mary Andersen used to come and help me in the arranging of my flowers; in fact, it was she who taught me how to press them, and she knew the haunts of the rarer plants.

One evening she had been with us during a long ramble across the Valley of Hinnom and over the Bethlehem plain. We were to go to Mrs Andersen's house to divide the spoil, and to spend the evening in making up a large quantity of dried flowers. We found her, not in the house, but on the roof of the little Syrian church, gathering flowers and delicate grasses.

"Grass upon the housetops!" cried Walter.

"Yes," said Mary; "and many a housetop is like a

little garden until the sun gains strength, and then the flowers are all burnt up. We had some fine plants of hellebore and of capers growing out of the walls of our own house, but none upon the roof."

I had a question for Mr Andersen: "I saw some Jews upon the roof of the house close by, this evening. They seemed to be praying; they had books, and were all looking with their faces towards the west, and bowing. What could they be about?"

"They were offering thanksgivings for the appearance of the new moon—and that bowing is usual when they are at prayers. This is a most important moon to them, for the Passover will be at its full."

"By the by," remarked Walter, "I see how very easy it was for the Jews to choose a lamb, or a kid, of a year old, for their feast at this season. Half the flocks that we meet seem to consist of yearlings, and the other half of newly born kids and their mothers."

"Just so. Immense multitudes of flocks must have been driven towards Jerusalem at this season during the period of Jewish greatness. In fact, the custom still lingers in the country, and sheep are still brought from great distances to be sold in Jerusalem."

"True," said Walter. "I remember seeing immense flocks last autumn, which were evidently arriving from a distance. There were thousands in each flock, and the shepherds were uncouth-looking fellows, in sheepskins, and armed with large clubs. They did not understand Arabic enough to return my salutation."

"You should have tried Turkish, Mr Russell, they

were from Asia Minor and from Armenia. We shall soon have the young lambs from Gilead and Moab, (Es Salt and Kerek,) and from Mesopotamia, and also the black sheep from Yemen."

"I saw some of those yesterday. Black sheep with white faces."

"Ah! they are early in coming in. I suppose on account of the immense number of pilgrims this year."

"Another thing has been made plain to me. The command to weave a sheaf of first-fruits of corn as an offering during the observance of Passover, (Lev. xxiii. 10–12.) I used to wonder where ripe corn would be got at this season; but now I see that it is ripening fast, and down on the plain of Jordan there might very well be some ripe."

"So it is," replied Mr Andersen; "and have you observed the teaching intended by this offering of one single sheaf, long before the rest of the harvest, on the morrow after the Sabbath, which corresponds with Easter Day? 'Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.' . . . 'Christ the first-fruits; afterward, they that are Christ's at his coming.'"

"I had not observed that before, thank you for drawing my attention to it. I am told that the Jews no longer count this as the first month."

"They do in ecclesiastical matters; but they have departed from Moses in inventing a civil year, which begins in September."

"Pray, Mr Andersen, can you tell me what is the latter rain?"

"The phrase, 'latter rain,' is a Scripture phrase, and therefore had best be explained by another. 'The latter rain in the first month,' which occurs in the prophet Joel."

"Then, shall we have more rain this month?"

"I trust so, for otherwise the crops would fail. The latter rain is absolutely necessary to fill out the ears of corn before harvest, just as the former rain was needed to enable the peasants to sow their seed."

"Then you consider the former rain to be what fell in October and November before the ploughing began?"

"Precisely; without it there could have been no ploughing; without the latter rain there could be no harvest."

That evening had been oppressively warm, but during the night the wind changed, and next day was almost cold as well as cloudy. Rain began to fall in the afternoon—the night was stormy and wet.

The latter rain had come, and lasted the next two days and nights. Everybody was glad. "El Hamdulilhah," (praised be God,) cried Haj Omar, "barley will be cheap this year."

"Nushkur Allah," (thank God,) echoed Helaneh, "wheat will be five piastres a measure."

"But will other things be cheap, Helaneh?"

"Maaloom," (certainly,) "when bread is cheap everything is cheap, blessed be His name. I shall now be able to marry my daughter."

"Which daughter, Helaneh? I did not know you had any daughter but the little Safieh."

"I have no other."

"But you are not going to marry that child—she cannot be eleven years old?"

"She is nine and seven months, Sitty. She was betrothed last Feast of the Cross."

"But she knows nothing yet. How can she keep house?"

"That does not matter, for I will go and live with her. Be not displeased, O lady! but she is my daughter,—I must go and live with her."

"But it is a sin to marry a child so young."

Helaneh smiled and said, "It is our *a'adeh*. I was married at nine years old, and she is nine and seven months. She is old already; but I was too poor before; but now from the money that thou hast paid me, (may God increase thy bounty!) I shall have enough for the wedding after the Feast of the Virgin."

I was completely taken by surprise, and vexed—not only at the outrageous idea of marrying off a child, who, if she was nine years and seven months old, was more ignorant and helpless than many an English child of eight, but at the cool way in which Helaneh had arranged matters for leaving my service. However, there was nothing to be done but submit, and try to find a successor. This accounts, thought I, for the smart blue jacket and gold embroidery which the little creature wore when her mother brought her to kiss my hand on their Christmas day; it was part of the finery

they dressed her in for the betrothal, like a doll as she is. I wonder what sort of a husband they mean to give her—a boy of twelve, I suppose; but I had left the kitchen, and was too much vexed to go back and ask Helaneh any further questions.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

GARDENING—THE GROOM'S MATRIMONIAL SCHEMES—INCANTATIONS.

I PASS over our second Easter. Walter had found innumerable groups for sketching among the pilgrims. The Pasha had kept order between the rival sects by dint of extraordinary exertions, and a threat that he would hang up so many of the leading priests if any heads were broken in the church.

All was now over, pilgrims and travellers had departed; Jerusalem was quiet again. The latter rain, too, had fallen at its proper season. Showers were not to be expected for the next six months. Spring was nearly over. Walter had gone out for an early morning walk.

I stayed at home gardening. It was a hot, hazy, sirocco morning. My garden consisted first of a line of flower-pots, sunk in Arab fashion along, and into, the top of the wall of my terrace, and also in that which served as balustrade to the stone staircase.

Here I had wallflowers, and cyclamens, and larkspurs, (called in Arabic bird's tongue,) convolvolus, (in Arabic finjan of the kâdi, or kâdi's cup,) and some pinks. In the court between the elder-tree and the vine, we had had a stone box built up and filled with earth. There were a young pomegranate tree, Walter's especial pet, an oleander, some hollyhocks, and a white and a red rose; none of them yet in blossom. Within the lattice door which screened our rooms from the court I had a little raised garden filled with mignionette; and, my greatest treasure of all, a violet. Mrs Wells had received some from Nabloos, where they grow freely among the running streams, and had given Mary and me one each, as well as some of the preserve which the Nablosians make of the fragrant blossoms.

My clove pink was growing in an old black water jar, turned bottom upwards so as to stand on the narrow mouth. Of course the bottom was broken. I wanted to place it so that the jar should be partly, at least, concealed by my mignionette, while the long drooping shoots and pink flowers festooned the stone work.

Haj Omar was cleaning bits and bridles in the shade by the kitchen door, and dividing his attention between them and his pipe, and occasional gossip with Helaneh; he came and helped me to settle my flower-pot, and to water my garden.

The gardening was finished, breakfast was ready, and Walter had not yet come back, so I closed the lattice door, opened those of the dining and drawing-

room for the sake of a little breeze, and sat down to sew in front of my new flower and its sweet-scented companions.

Helaneh unwittingly imitated my example, and bringing out some cobble-stitch patching, seated herself on the ground near Haj Omar. And now came an amusing dialogue.

"Thou hast betrothed thy daughter, Helaneh?"

"I have betrothed her these six months."

"Constantine told me, but I did not believe, for thou didst not give me any sweetmeats. So I said, 'She has not betrothed her.'"

"And why should I give thee any sweetmeats, O Haj, art thou my brother?"

"El Hamdulillah, that I am not. Who is the bridegroom? a child like thy daughter?"

"He is a man, and no child, may healing" (peace) "be to thy senses, O Haj. Elias is a *man*, and the son of somebody, Ibn en-nâs, son of people," (*i.e.*, of good family.) "His grandfather (may God have mercy upon him) was a curate. He works with Yussuf the tailor, and he has made three full suits at his own cost for Saïeh already—one of them covered with gold thread."

"Ah!" said Haj Omar, shaking his head; "marriages are expensive things: if wives were not so dear I might buy one also."

"Thou! hast thou not a wife and sons in thine own country?"

"Allah knows! It is thirty years since I left them; but I am getting old, a wife would be very useful to me."

"Yes! of course you Moslems may have many wives, like the Fellahheen sheikhs, in every town you go to, and make them work for you."

"And why not? what else can women do?"

"Hold thy peace, Haj, or I will show thee what else women can do."

"Ay, ay, I forgot that they have ever long tongues. But now, Helaneh, thou art a sensible woman, give me thy advice. Raschid the green-grocer has a sister, she is clever, and he will give her to me for two thousand piastres, and she is an Egyptian like myself, and Raschid says the maid is fair, as white as I am." (Haj Omar was copper colour!)

"Where hast thou got two thousand piasters, O Haj?"

"Walter Bek gives me one hundred and twenty a month, (may his days be lengthened,) and I have saved three hundred; nine hundred I had before, and soon I shall have the rest. But listen, and don't begin to reap thy corn while it is yet green, I have not told thee the half, Mahhmood, the groom of the Consul, says that it would be much better for me to buy a good mule."

"Now be ashamed, O Haj! a mule instead of a wife!"

Haj Omar took no notice of Helaneh's exclamation, but went on quietly. "A good mule would bring me in two thousand piastres a year, for I could let her out for pilgrims and for ploughing, and Mahhmood saith wisely, she may be more discreet than a wife, I can talk to her all the same, for her ears are long, but her tongue"——

Helaneh bounced up—"I will talk no more with thee,

thou mad fellow," (majnoon, a term of great reproach in Arabic;) "go to thy Moslem friends, go! to ask advice about mules and wives;" and so saying, she ran into the kitchen.

Haj Omar stared after her for a moment, and then went on muttering to himself, "Mahhmood is right, a mule would not have run off as that foolish woman has done, but then she is only a Kudsiyeh," (Jerusalemite,) "Raschid's sister is a Musriyeh," (Egyptian,) "yes, yes, *she* would be more prudent; let us see, what could a mule do? She could plough and carry burdens; but a wife—yes, she could do more; she could grind the flour and make the bread; yes, and she could wash and cook, and carry burdens as well as a mule; but a woman could carry a message and bring back the answer—for hath not a woman a tongue? Mashallah alaihah," (God be praised on her account,) "a woman *is* better than a mule." Herewith he gathered up his things, took a whiff of his pipe, and, forgetting Helaneh's ire, put his head into the kitchen, saying, "Yes, Helaneh, I have arranged my matter, I will take Raschid's sister. Inshallah, she has a sweet tongue! *Some* women have sweet tongues." He turned on his heel just in time to escape a vessel full of dirty water which the enraged Helaneh flung after him; but he did not perceive it, and went his way smoking, and left me laughing.

Whether the importance of the subject oppressed his spirits, or whether Helaneh's ill humour, which she showed in twenty little ways, grieved him, I know not—but Haj Omar was very grave all that day, looking

more like an owl, in fact, than a would-be bridegroom, and next day he complained of headache.

On coming back from Mary Andersen's, what should meet my eyes but Haj Omar seated on a low stool, his turban on the ground beside him, the fierce rays of the mid-day sun beating on his bare shaven skull—while a sheikh or conjuror stood behind him reading over him from an Arabic MS. book, in a kind of chant. Then he took out a small piece of paper which contained some writing, rolled it up into a cigar shape and made the groom smoke it while he muttered incantations. I saw at a glance that the conjuror was not an Arab. His dress was different, and his cunning black eyes and Indian physiognomy gave him a sinister expression, which was heightened by the long white hair of his head and beard. Meer Ali was his name.

Haj Omar had an inexpressibly droll victimised air as he sat meekly with hands folded until the sheikh had finished, when he got up, shook himself like a dog, awoke as from a stupor, and said he was quite well.

"They are very clever those Hinood," (Hindoos,) said Helaneh. "My sister's child was ill for a very long time last year; it got thinner and thinner; we tried all the doctors and made vows to the Virgin, but he only got worse and worse. At last we brought the sheikh, and he read over him and smoked his nose three times with a paper, and his ears twice, and pinned another on the top of his tarboosh, and the boy soon recovered, and he is quite well now, praise be to God!

yet the Mograbee" (Morocco) "sheikhs are the cleverest of all."

"But, Helaneh, what did your priest say to this? Our Lord Jesus alone can cure people. How can the reading of a sheikh do it?"

"The priest said nothing, but everybody calls the sheikh if the doctor can't cure them. The priests don't care about such things, O lady! but verily the sheikhs are clever and know many things."

CHAPTER XLIX.

MAY ROSES—MOSLEM TOMBS.

It was the 12th of May when Haj Omar brought us a few ears of ripe barley. The harvest was not to be yet for at least a fortnight. These had been gathered from the early sown patches.

From the middle of April to the end of May the hot winds alternated with the cool north-west breeze. For three days the heat would be stifling, and the dust (fine, disagreeable dust) could not be kept out of the house, though we shut all the windows and doors as the only means of keeping ourselves cool. Walter found considerable difficulty in painting while this lasted, and thus his two sittings for Naomi and three for Ruth, became more than eight before he had finished and was ready to go to Bethlehem.

But at last that joyful moment arrived, and in the first week of May we began our preparations for going to Bethlehem. Tents and camp-stools we had bought from some of the Easter travellers. An iron frame for fire grates, various kettles, saucepans, and lanterns, tin plates, cups, and dishes, one or two small carpets,* some straw mats made in Bethany, and other sundries were collected partly by Constantine, partly by Haj Omar, who took the liveliest interest in the whole affair, and hovered about the kitchen door all day long, either sleeping or waking. We had discovered that he was an opium smoker. His dearly-loved pipe conveyed more than tobacco smoke to his lips. Walter happened to want his horse at an unusual hour. Constantine said the groom was asleep. "Awake him and order the horse." I thought he seemed unwilling to obey, but Walter repeated the command. Constantine soon returned.

"The groom says he won't saddle the horse."

"Tell him he *must.*"

"He won't, O my lord, and when people drink opium they lose their sense sometimes."

"Drink opium! who drinks opium?"

"Ya Sidi," (lengthen thy patience.) "Haj Omar always drinks opium when he drinks tobacco. He cannot sleep except when he drinks opium."

"Haj Omar an opium smoker! I have heard that

* Such as are used by the Moslems in prayer, having a pointed pattern, (crimson on a green ground,) intended to be turned towards Mecca.

Egyptians do this. It is most injurious for his health. Come, Emily, let us take a walk instead. There are clouds, and I don't think we shall find it too hot."

There was a pleasant faint perfume among the olive trees, for they were covered with blossom, in bunches of tiny white flowers at the foot of each leaf.

We crossed towards the Upper Pool in search of a mandrake plant, which I remembered to have seen. We wanted to get the fruit. It had not been disturbed; but the little green apples, about the size of walnuts, were not yet ripe, although the broad leaves of the plant were beginning to fade. However, I got some magnificent spikes of lilac, crimson, and white salvia instead.

Making a long sweep across the fields, we got into the road of the Convent of the Cross. Although it was past nine in the morning, there were troops of peasant women still coming into market, and shedding a delicious fragrance around, for the baskets and sacks on their heads were filled, not with vegetables, but with roses!

There had been roses in the market for some days, and Constantine had bought a few. But here were scores of women carrying millions of roses. I greeted one group: "Good morning to you; where are you carrying your roses?"

"To the market."

Presently another troop came up—stout young women, barefooted; several of them carried a child slung in a hammock at their back.

"Where are you going, O daughters?"

"To the Greek Convent."

"What will they do with all those roses?"

They laughed: "Make rose-water for the churches. How ignorant she is!"

"Look! she has no gold or silver on her head," said another, who was herself wearing heavy silver bracelets, which she displayed to advantage while raising her prettily-turned arm to steady the basket of roses on her head, and broke out into an improvisation:—

> "The Frank woman is ignorant,
> And knows not what roses are for.
> She wears no jewels on her arms,
> But the Malhha girl wears much silver."

And this she kept repeating until out of sight and hearing.

Turning homewards, we soon got into the Mohammedan cemetery. Being Thursday, there were multitudes of white-sheeted women sitting in groups among the tombs. They believe that on Thursday the spirits of the departed hover over the grave, and they go to tell them the family news. Some of the richer ones had tents pitched, and had brought out their whole establishment—children, slaves, and all, and even kitchen apparatus for preparing the noonday meal. Others had only got baskets of provisions and narghilehs, in charge of a single slave. Here and there a mourner might be seen weeping over a new-made grave. One elderly woman was sitting by a little tomb, evidently just built; she had put a bunch of flowers upon it, and

was rocking herself to and fro, and lamenting aloud. But no one seemed to heed her. Close by a party of boys—almost too old to be any longer tolerated in the hareem, and clearly not the ruled but the rulers of their mothers and sisters—were playing riotously and teasing the black women slaves, who bore all good-naturedly, as if they were well accustomed to it.

Almost every tomb was ornamented with fresh flowers, and on several were placed sweetmeats and provisions. Blind devotees, who would not have been permitted to wander thus freely among the women had they had the use of their eyes, were being led from one group to another, in order that they should recite chapters of the Koran or prayers beside the various graves, or eat the provisions put there on purpose, and then say, "May God have mercy upon his soul."

Strange, strange was this pic-nic of mourners in the broad sunshine, unsheltered by a single tree, among the tombs, many of them newly whitewashed for the occasion. The women who happened to be near were inclined to be inquisitive and rude to me, pulling my dress, and talking impertinently. They might have been very troublesome but for my brother's protection, and I saw it would never do to go alone into a crowd of Moslem women.

Being a European, they were not particularly careful to veil their faces as Walter passed. "What an ugly set!" he exclaimed, "and their expressions so coarse; not the slightest refinement in a single face." It was true. The old women were all hags, and the younger

ones overgrown, rude, coarse children. "One might guess the absence of refinement from their dress—look at those colours!—hideous scarlets, yellows, and greens. If these be fair specimens of the effendies' hareems, no one need regret their being kept with latticed windows or under white sheets."

Going forward, we came upon a much prettier scene. There is a little aqueduct which conveys the water from the upper pool into the city, to the pool near the Church of the Sepulchre. Where it crosses the road, we found our friends, the rose women of the villages, congregated, washing their fragrant burdens. How pretty they looked in their dark-blue dresses and bending over the stream, now filled with hundreds and thousands of many-tinted roses, white delicate blush, pink, and full red. Each woman appeared to have taken a bit of the stream for herself, tucked up her dress, stepped into the water and emptied her sack and her baskets into it; the ruddy hue of her flowers being reflected cast a glow upon the olive-coloured faces, and the pretty braceleted arms were plunged again and again among the roses, till they were all well washed, or rather wetted. For, alas! the object of all this washing was not disinterested—the roses had to be sold by weight, and the water would make them heavier. It was an Arcadian scene, but the simplicity was wanting.

Presently, up came a man driving a flock of kids, long-eared, black, silky-haired, and very young. They forthwith jumped down into the water amid the roses; great was the confusion, charming the spectacle. The

shepherd leaned on his staff enjoying the mischief, and the nymphs pelted the kids with roses, but cursed them vigorously all the time, and were at length fain to take them up in their arms and fling them out upon the land. How it ended we did not see, for the kids sprung back again with inimitable agility, and we walked on.

Perhaps some day Walter may make a picture of the kids among the roses, for he took a slight sketch on the back of a letter while we stood there.

CHAPTER L.

OUR ENCAMPMENT AT BETHLEHEM—HARVEST FIELDS.

WE were ready to start for Bethlehem. Helaneh stayed behind to marry her daughter; and I had got a Bethlehem woman instead. Walter's picture was packed with all imaginable care; our first day's dinner put into the saddle-bags; camels growling at our door by sunrise, loaded with bedding and tents, tables and chairs, legs uppermost of course, pots and pans, and garnished with dangling cans of oil, water-bottles, lanterns, &c. Constantine rode a donkey, and carried a basket of cups, saucers, and glasses; while Haj Omar jogged along behind me on another donkey, smoking his pipe, and with a huge packing-needle stuck in his turban.

There were no corn-fields on the hill close to Bethlehem, we therefore pitched our tents on a shady terrace, among olive-trees, and used to wander about in search of Walter's sketches. There were large barley-fields, all ripe and golden, near the Shepherd's Field, and smaller ones nearer still.

How indescribably delightful the free tent-life after living so long within the stone walls of the city. There are no barriers to the prospect, the eye can roam from hill to hill, from the stones at your feet to the dim blue mountains in the distance. There is nothing to hinder your walking or riding to those same blue mountains if you choose. No gates or bars, scarcely a fence, and certainly not a hedge, would check your progress.

And the fresh air all around, above, below, everywhere. You breathe it, you feel it, you move in it; there is not so much as a glass window between you and the far away sky overhead. Nothing hinders the fanning of the summer breeze; nothing prevents it from bringing to you at every moment the perfume of a thousand aromatic herbs: the odours of wild thyme from the distant hills; ethereal fragrances distilled from the grasses, the flowers, nay, from the very thistle-stalks by the early morning dew.

Oh! there is nothing like tent-life in the pure climate of Palestine.

I thought so, when the sun was gone and twilight faded; when our horses, each under his own tree, stood munching his corn; when Haj Omar sat smoking his pipe, and Constantine broke out singing a wild chant

as he never did within the court of our Jerusalem house.

The shades deepened around, and it became dark, and the fireflies flitted here and there among the olive-trees; now close enough to cast a faint light across my brother's face as he sat beside me; now dancing farther and farther, chasing each other noiselessly.

It was quite dark; there was no moon, but the stars shone with a moistened brilliancy, like the light of kindness from eyes where a tear has lately been.

We sat and talked in low tones, and agreed that there was nothing in the world like tent-life; and as we talked the eastern sky began to brighten, and the waning moon rose gently and threw her pathetic light, not upon stone walls and roofs, but over trees, and valleys, and mountains, so soft in their shadowy outlines, so mysterious in their vagueness, and the tree crickets answered each other in the far off fields, and tiny owlets flitted among the branches.

Above all I thought so, in the early morning when the first twitter of the little birds aroused me and I went forth and stood without the door of my tent, watching the dawning day, saw the massy dew clouds rolling down the valleys, and caught the first rays of the sun glittering in the drops that hung on the leaves overhead, or the wet stones below, and heard the turtle-doves murmuring to their mates, and watched the insects and the flies springing into renewed life; the lizards darting after each other around the tree trunks; while the call of the partridge to her brood echoed from

the nearest hill-side, and unseen larks poured forth their joyous song from the blue sky above.

Reaping had begun in the low lands near the Shepherd's Field. The Shepherd's Field itself was green with a young wheat crop. Early in the morning was not only the pleasantest time for sketching, but also the best for seeing the people at work. Walter and I sat down under an olive-tree and watched. Whole families were there—men, women, and children.

The grain was rather pulled than cut, and as each handful was taken the reaper gave it a flourishing swing up into his bosom, (see Psalm cxxix. 7.) As they reaped they sang—one led, the rest responded in chorus, "reaping with joy," and now and then the women who were getting the grain into bundles would stop and clap their hands with measured beat, and then go off into the shrill el-el-lu.

The gleaners, mostly old women and young girls, followed hard upon the reapers, filling the corner of their veil* with such ears as had been dropped.

In the afternoon we came again. A great piece of the ground had been cleared, even the gleaners had left it, but in their stead had followed oxen and sheep, goats, cows, asses, and camels, eagerly cropping the fresh straw and picking up the stray ears which had escaped the gleaner. In one corner were some boys over a fire which they had made of the straw, and in its blaze they were parching, or, as we should rather say singeing, handfuls of green corn from the adjoining

* Ruth iii. 15.

wheat field. They gave us some, and we gave them backsheesh. It was sweet and good when the husks were rubbed off between the hands.* On the ground close by was an infant sleeping upon its mother's red coat, and near it sat a girl, beating out her day's gleanings upon a stone, while a tame calf put its nose almost into her lap in search of the straw which she threw aside. Behind was a little urchin of five years old, draining the last drop from a cruse and crying because there was no more vinegar left.

Presently there was a bustle among the reapers—the songs became louder—the chorus vociferous. The owner, one of the sheikhs of the town, had come from Bethlehem to inspect progress.

"God be with you," (Allah ma'koom.) "God bless thee." "May He strengthen your bodies." "And thine." And the singing was resumed, and the reaping went on more briskly than ever; while Walter rejoiced in the good fortune which had brought us here just in time to witness this crowning incident, and hastily took the sheikh's portrait.

He was rather a stout man, and his robe of fine scarlet cloth became him well, relieved as it was by the outer mantle of black wool and full white sleeves of his shirt. Of course he was to appear in the picture as Boaz, but his face did not at all suit my ideas about the benevolent countenance of the Jewish mighty man of wealth. It had a sinister expression, enhanced by a scar over the left eye, remains of a terrible gash got in

* 1 Sam. xvii. 17.

some faction fight, and I fancied that the gleaners were rather anxious to conceal the fruits of their industry from him as his glance wandered restlessly around. Walter afterwards substituted Abraham's face for his, which answered much better for the picture. And now they began to carry the grain to the threshing-floors; horses, mules, donkeys, and camels were pressed into the service. Immense piles of corn were tied on each side of the animal, so that its head was scarcely visible beyond, or its legs below. The beasts became perfect walking corn-stacks, and the effect was very droll. My brother sketched some of them also for his picture, and I could not help exclaiming, "Why, Walter, there will be everything in it! Do you mean to stretch your canvas, or how is it all to be got in?" But he only smiled, and said, "Am I not fortunate? We have seen it all. Now, if I could only paint it as I feel and wish, what a picture it would be!" We had had a serious consultation about costumes. How were the people in the picture to be clad? Did the Bethlehem people of three thousand years ago wear the same kind of clothes that our Bethlehemites now wear?

"I cannot answer that question, Emily, neither can any one else; however, I shall adopt the present costumes for my picture. First, they are more likely to be true to the reality than any others I can imagine. If manners and habits, forms of speech and of life are still the same, why not the fashion of the people's garments? It is so very likely those brown-striped cloaks of goats and camels' hair must have been worn in the



BETHLEHEM WOMEN.

Under-garment of linen from Egypt, or cotton from Samaria, dyed with indigo from Jordan Plain. Upper coat spun, woven, and dyed by themselves. Veil of white linen or cotton.

earliest times; they are the manufacture of the country; and the blues and reds of the women's clothes are charming; while the ample veil must be as old as Sarah and Rebekah.*

CHAPTER LI.

CHANGES—OUR NEW CEMETERY ON MOUNT ZION—GETHSEMANE.

We should probably have lingered in our encampment till the former rain drove us into town; but a sad event cut short our stay. Little David died very suddenly, after only a few hours' illness, probably from the effects of a sunstroke. We could not persuade Rachel and her father to come to us, and therefore returned to Jerusalem that we might comfort them in this fresh and heavy trial. Walter missed the little fellow sadly. His winning ways and eagerness to learn had endeared him to us both.

Soon after this Mrs Andersen took Mary to Europe, in the hope that change of climate might rid her of the troublesome ague which seemed to have laid hold of her constitution, and to be undermining it.

Our life was now very quiet. Walter painted dili-

* Genesis xxiv. 65.—I have often thought that the thousand pieces of silver given by Abimelech to Abraham for Sarah (Gen. xx. 16) for "a covering of the eyes," were a head ornament of coins like those still worn round the forehead and face in Palestine.

gently, and helped Nathaniel forward with his studies. Rachel and I were much together, and we were a happy party when Abraham sometimes joined us all in the evening. Summer continued till the former rains had chilled the air and filled the cisterns. Then came beautiful, bracing December, with its early crocuses and slight frosts, and the ever-to-be-remembered colouring of the mountains. After this came winter, rain, and snow. Mr Andersen sometimes (though rarely, for he was always busy at missionary work) spent an evening with us. One evening, towards the end of winter, he walked in just as we were sitting down to tea. After a little chat on various matters, Mr Andersen said—

"Mr Russell, you will be glad to learn that the place for our new burial-ground is now finally settled."

"O Mr Andersen, will it be that beautiful terrace on Mount Zion?"

"Yes, it will. I am glad of it not only for your sake, but for the sake of our whole congregation. In two or three days the documents will be finished, and then we can arrange for the removal of our friends. I will go there with you to-morrow afternoon if you can spare time."

It was not many minutes' walk from the Latin burial-ground, past the Greek and Armenian cemeteries, to the spot, on a sheltered terrace overhanging the deep and silent valley at the foot of Zion. A few old olive-trees here and there gave a home-look to the place; and the distant views eastwards towards Moab, and south over the Judean mountains, were very lovely.

"There is only one thing, Walter; I wish it had been turned to the Mount of Olives."

"We could have wished that also, Miss Russell, but may be content that we have so very pleasant a place in every other respect. We shall not have far to go in search of the Mount of Olives in the resurrection morning."

"We,"—that *we* fell startlingly on my ear. Were we indeed visiting the place where, in a few more short years, our bodies should be laid, in patient expectation of the final deliverance from death and its bonds? Well; why not?

Mr Andersen seemed to imply that the resurrection morning would indeed find us here. Then, as if reading my thoughts, he added: "But it does not much matter, Miss Russell, whether here or in other lands, or at the bottom of the deep sea; the Lord will know where to look for His own, and not one of them will be forgotten. He will need them all to be with Him when He shall return to the Mount of Olives. Have you forgotten that it says, 'And all the saints with Thee?'"

No, indeed, I had not forgotten. Ever since Mr Andersen himself had brought comfort to my distressed heart by repeating those simple yet wonderful words on the sad morning when first I saw the Mount of Olives, I first learned to connect its hallowed ground not only with the past history of our Saviour, but with my own most solemn hopes, and with His future glorious return to His own land. How could I ever forget them?

"You see, Miss Russell, we are beyond the limits of ancient Jerusalem on this terrace," said Mr Andersen presently. "This is beyond the camp, or rather beyond the walls, which, I have no doubt, were carried along the scarped rock which bounds our terrace on the north, and shelters it so completely."

Then with his usual delicate feeling he left Walter and me to ourselves for a few minutes, saying he had some measurements to take at the opposite end of the ground. "Mr Andersen tells me, Emily, that it is intended to lay Bishop Alexander here, where you are sitting. These are the two best trees, and they will overshadow his grave. But that we are at liberty to choose any other spot for my father."

It was soon done, in a quiet corner. My brother and I raised a little pile of stones to mark the place, before Mr Andersen rejoined us, and we walked home. It was still early, so we passed round Mount Zion eastwards, along the top of Ophel and Moriah, and so by the south-east corner where the great stones are in the City Wall. I always liked that walk, because of the quiet, the perfect stillness. There is a sort of perpetual Sabbath brooding over the Mount of Olives and the Kedron Vale.

CHAPTER LII.

MY BROTHER'S PICTURE, RETURN OF NAOMI AND RUTH TO BETHLEHEM.

I MUST now describe Walter's picture, which was finished at last. He had chosen the moment when Naomi and Ruth arrive at Bethlehem late in the afternoon.

Sunlight rested lovingly upon the slopes and houses of her native town, while shadows fell athwart the road by which she had come, and the hills and valleys which she and her daughter-in-law had past in their pilgrimage.

"For those who choose to understand it so," Walter said, "I have tried to suggest the idea that Naomi, who had passed through trials and sorrows during her lifetime — through the depths of affliction and by the rugged road of human experience—had left the shadows behind her, and had now attained the evening of her days, where rest and the sunshine of prosperity awaited her."*

The expression of Ruth's countenance was the point in the picture—subdued, chastened by sorrow, yet lighted up not more by the sunshine which fell full upon her than by a glow of surprise and joy at the

* "At even-time t shall be light," (Zech. xiv. 7,) is a promise given to the nation of Israel for their comfort in this cloudy and dark day of their long dispersion.

warm welcome which the people of Bethlehem were giving to her mother-in-law. She glances half shyly, yet with extreme delight, upon the crowd of kinsfolk, old and young, which were pouring from every door and gathering upon every roof and terrace to greet Naomi.

The whole city was stirred at their coming. The dark yet soft expression of her black eyes, which had cost my brother so much trouble, was exquisitely rendered—timid, pleading, bright, yet not flashing. I felt that Walter had achieved a great success in the tenderness of his Ruth.

Black eyes and raven tresses are generally associated with majesty, heroism, fire; but here they were the ornaments of a sweet, confiding, womanly woman. True, the lines of the face contributed in no small degree to this effect; and constancy, rather than firmness, was expressed by that gentle mouth. Her forehead was open, in form semicircular—not very high, yet not low. The graceful bend of the beautiful neck told of willing submission to her adopted mother.

Naomi was a contrast to Ruth in most respects, not only in age but in fairness of complexion; in the marked and beautifully chiselled features of her face; in her firm step, and the decided expression of eyes, nose, and mouth. Yet sorrow and a kindly nature had softened the keenness of her glance.

There was dignity, but no longer pride, in her carriage. Her eye also kindled as it fell upon a brother who was pressing forward to meet her, accompanied by his children, two beautiful sons and a daughter.

Rachel, Nathaniel, and our poor little David had served as the originals for their faces, and Walter had caught the mingled expression of joy and pain which might have rested upon Naomi's face on beholding her kinsfolk, and remembering her own husband and sons, buried in the land of the stranger, when she exclaimed, "Call me not Naomi, but call me Marah, for the Almighty hath dealt bitterly with me."

The principal figures—Naomi and Ruth—were represented with their faces towards Bethlehem, which they were just entering. The houses, tier above tier, received the rays of the declining sun, which shone cheerfully from behind a clump of olive-trees upon the faces of the travellers. Some young women just come from the well, as usual at eventide, bore water-jars on their shoulders; crowds of women and children, in picturesque groups, and of many colours, were pouring forth to greet them. Skirting the road, on the left-hand side, was a wheat-field; the full ears, scarcely beginning to turn yellow, waved in the breeze. Down in the valley, towards the shepherd's field, reapers were already at work upon the earliest crops of barley; and coming up by a bridle-path from these, were asses laden with immense sheaves, in the picturesque fashion of the country. Boaz, a middle-aged man, hale and handsome, was walking by their side. He looked the man of industry and wealth, richly apparelled, and of a benevolent countenance. Behind Naomi and Ruth were groups of those who had been companions in their journey from the land of Moab: desert camels, proud and

noble-looking, laden with fleeces of wool scarcely softer and purer than their own close curls of white and fawn colour; and swarthy Bedawee, lithe of limb, with sandalled feet, striped mantle, and gay kefieh, secured upon the head by a fillet of camel's-wool rope. In their charge were flocks of yearling lambs from the pasture-lands of Moab and Ammon.*

The season of spring, or rather early summer, was marked by these circumstances, and by the state of the wheat and barley-fields, as well as by the vines on the terraces of the immediate foreground, rich in the luxuriance of their fresh yet fully-grown leaves, with here and there a bunch of tender tiny grapes; also by the scarlet blossoms on the pomegranate trees, from one of which, on the nearest terrace, a pretty child (one of those we had seen at a Jewish wedding) was gathering the loveliest for her dark hair, while her brother scrambled up the terrace to see what all the commotion was about, and their father, sickle in hand, left off trimming his vines for the same purpose.

Under the rough stone wall that supported the terrace grew yellow stocks, rose-coloured mallows, wild mignonette, and others proper to the season. Down down were other vineyards, with round watch-towers, such as we see at the present day, and such as the prophet† and our Lord both allude to in speaking of the vineyards of Judah.

* 2 Kings iii. 4; 2 Chron. xvii. 11; Ezek. xxvii. 21. In ancient days Moab furnished lambs and wool, and the Arabs seem to have been the traders.

† Isaiah v.; Matthew xxi. 33.

Behind Naomi and Ruth, as I have already said, the landscape sloped downwards and stretched away, mountains and valleys in successive descent towards the Jordan valley, now lit up by evening sunshine; or varied by lengthening shades.

Here were patches of cultivation, there long barren stretches of hilly downs, and in one place near the confused gorges of the Dead Sea district, could be discerned camps of Bedaween, their black goats' hair tents of Kedar, arranged in circles or semicircles.* Far in the background, the Moab mountains closed the landscape: they reflected not now the glorious tints of their winter colouring, but were veiled by a mist of ethereal blue; their summer robe; vague, dreamy-looking, the very type of enchanted ground.

But the town of Kerek (Kir in ancient days) gleamed and glittered as the rays of evening fell upon its battlements and towers. Ah! surely Naomi ust often, in the hours of calm happiness which she terwards enjoyed upon the hills of Bethlehem, hushing er infant grandson to sleep upon her bosom, have ooked with tender affection to that friendly shelter ere she had found a home in the days of adversity, and where the dust of her husband and sons was sleeping. (1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4.) No wonder that her descendant David sought shelter there in Moab for his own father

* May not they who dwelt in them have been Amorite ancestors of the Taamra tribe? Amorites in Abraham's time had their haunts in the wilderness, between En-geddi, Hebron, and Bethlehem.—Gen. xiv. 7; 2 Chron. xx. 2.

and mother, Jesse being Ruth's grandson, and thus having claims upon his grandmother's mother in Moab. Kir (Kerek) and Bethlehem still exist to this very day, the most important towns of their district,* while all the other towns of Moab and Ammon are gone, given over to the children of the East, (Ezek. xxv. 9, 10.)

Kir and Bethlehem, the two cradles of David's royal line, bathed in glorious sunlight. It has taken long to describe; but it took me only a few minutes to notice the new points in my brother's picture and its general effect, now that all was done, especially the all-pervading sunshine—subdued, mellow, yet golden sunshine—which, most true to nature, he had succeeded in throwing over the whole; the landscape, the sky, the very air, all were full of sunshine.

CHAPTER LVII.

OUR FATHER LAID TO REST ON MOUNT ZION.

THE day had at last arrived for the removal of our father to the new burial-ground.

I had no desire to go to the old place, all public as it was by the roadside. My brother took me to the other, and left me there to wait in quiet till he himself should see the coffin raised and carried to its last home. I sat

* "Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days." (Jer. xlix. 47.) As a remarkable prophecy in view of this fact.

down beside the grave which had been prepared in the spot we chose when last here. How very peaceful and retired this place, not only in comparison with the last site, but in itself. The terrace overhangs the steep mountain-side, and the sounds that reach it come from the valley lying deep below, or broken and softened by distance from the opposite hills. A flock of goats browsing upon the scattered tufts of herbage, or running along the narrow ledges where none but goats could stand, were the only living creatures in sight, excepting their little shepherd, who carried a new-born kid in his bosom. The silence was scarcely broken by the soft bleating of the kids and their mothers, or the tinkling bell of the leaders of the flock.

I have often since been thankful for that quiet hour, in which my past life could be calmly reviewed, from the day when I could first remember Walter an infant in my mother's arms until this moment.

I had never had any other brother or sister. We had been companions in lessons and in play, until he was sent to school and to college. Then trouble brought us together again. He was called to be with me when my mother died and was buried. Again he came to look for me, and to care for me, when our father's death left me here alone in a strange land. What a happy life we had led here in Jerusalem. The sound of footsteps recalled me to the present. Walter had returned, and we walked together to meet my father's coffin, when those who bore him entered the burial-ground.

We laid him peaceably to rest not as on the fu[neral] morning, in haste, in the blaze of a scorching cloudless sun, but amid the slanting shadows of evening among the olive-trees. Quietly, gently, solemnly.

And when that was done, Abraham and Mahmud brought their little David, and we laid [him] dear child beside my father, and —— But [who] thoughts that were thought, or the words spoken?

We, like the Patriarch of old, had gained not an inheritance, but the possession of a precious grave in the Promised Land. . . .

The sun was setting, Mr Anderson, [who] and seeing Abraham's sorrowful lingering [look] grave, he said aloud, "Them which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with Him."

With these comforting words he led the way home to Jerusalem by the Zion Gate.

THE END.

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